



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>









A

MANUAL OF INSTRUCTIONS

IN

Christian Doctrine.

LONDON:

BURNS AND LAMBERT, 17 & 18 PORTMAN STREET,
AND 63 PATERNOSTER ROW.

1861.

100 c 157

Imprimatur.

N. CARD. WISEMAN.

Westm., Aug. 1, 1861.



ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS little volume was called into existence from the real want that was felt for something of the kind. Those engaged in the instruction of schools, and still more in the preparation of school-teachers, have made frequent complaints that they could find no book of religious instruction suited to their purpose. To meet this want, three priests, themselves engaged in the work of education, spared what time they could from their other avocations, and prepared the present course of Instructions on Christian Doctrine.

While there are some obvious disadvantages in a book having more authors than one, yet in a work of this sort there are also some special advantages. For it is less important that a course of instructions should be uniform in style than that it should be accurate in matter; and it is a considerable help towards insuring accuracy, and avoiding important omissions, that it should have been subjected to the suggestions and criticisms of two or three persons. If, too, students are to learn a knowledge of doctrine from one book, it may be a positive advantage that their minds should not be cramped by following one writer exclusively in his style and method of treatment.

It may be added, that as the object aimed at has been to provide a book of instruction fitted for general use, the writers have been careful to avoid all mere theories and speculations, and in every case to rest their statements on the authority of approved theologians.

CONTENTS.

PART I.

On Faith, and the Creed.

CHAP.	PAGE
I. Introduction to the Creed, or the Theological Virtues in general, with a particular account of Faith . . .	1
II. Faith, its Nature and Qualities	4
III. The Necessity of Faith	6
IV. Exercise of Faith	8
V. Sins against Faith	9
VI. Mysteries of Faith	12
VII. Of the Creeds sanctioned by the general use of the Church	13
VIII. The Apostles' Creed	16
<i>First Article: "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth"</i>	17
IX. The Creation	21
X. The Angels	22
XI. The Creation of Man	29
XII. <i>Second Article: "And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord"</i>	31
XIII. Of the Incarnation	35
XIV. Errors on the Incarnation	39
XV. <i>Third Article: "Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary"</i>	40
XVI. The Blessed Virgin is the Mother of God	42
XVII. Devotions connected with the Incarnation	44
XVIII. Seasons of particular Devotion	46
XIX. Practices of Devotion connected with the Incarnation: The Stations, or Way of the Cross	48
XX. Devotions in honour of the Sacred Heart, the most Precious Blood, and the Five Wounds	50
XXI. <i>Fourth Article: "Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried"</i>	52
XXII. <i>Fifth Article: "He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead"</i>	55
XXIII. <i>Sixth Article: "He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty"</i>	59
XXIV. <i>Seventh Article: "From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead"</i>	61
XXV. <i>Eighth Article: "I believe in the Holy Ghost"</i>	63
XXVI. <i>Ninth Article: "The Holy Catholic Church; the Communion of Saints"</i>	65

CHAP.	PAGE
XXVII. The Pope, or Head of the Church	68
XXVIII. The Marks of the Church	70
XXIX. Application of the Marks of the Church	73
XXX. Infallibility of the Church	79
XXXI. The Communion of Saints	82
XXXII. <i>Tenth Article</i> : "The Forgiveness of Sins." Ori- ginal Sins	87
XXXIII. The Immaculate Conception	89
XXXIV. Actual Sin	92
XXXV. Mortal Sin and its Effects	94
XXXVI. Venial Sin and its Effects	96
XXXVII. <i>Eleventh Article</i> : "The Resurrection of the Body"	98
XXXVIII. <i>Twelfth Article</i> : "Life everlasting"	102

PART II.

On Charity, and the Commandments.

XXXIX. The Necessity and Nature of Charity	106
XL. How often we are bound to make Acts of Charity	111
XLI. On the virtue of Charity as exercised towards our neighbour	112
XLII. On the spiritual and corporal Works of Mercy	117
XLIII. On the Commandments in general	120
XLIV. Of the Obligations of the Commandments	124
XLV. On the Law of God	126
XLVI. Of Conscience	127
XLVII. The First Commandment. What it enjoins	129
XLVIII. The First Commandment. What it forbids. Idol- atry	134
XLIX. Of Divination	138
L. Of Vain Observation or Superstition	140
LI. Of Irreligion	142
LII. The Second Commandment: "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain"	144
LIII. Of Oaths	146
LIV. Of Vows	149
LV. Of Cursing, Blasphemy, and Profane Words	153
LVI. The Third Commandment: "Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath-day"	155
LVII. Of the obligation of hearing Mass and resting from servile Work	157
LVIII. The Fourth Commandment: "Honour thy father and thy mother"	160
LIX. Of the Duties of Children to their Parents	162
LX. Of the Duties of Subjects to their Superiors	166
LXI. Of the Duties of Parents to their Children	168
LXII. The Fifth Commandment: "Thou shalt not kill"	170

CONTENTS.

vii

CHAP.	PAGE
LXIII. Of Scandal	175
LXIV. The Sixth Commandment: "Thou shalt not commit adultery"	178
LXV. Remedies against Impurity	181
LXVI. The Seventh Commandment: "Thou shalt not steal"	184
LXVII. On Restitution	188
LXVIII. Eighth Commandment: "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour"	193
LXIX. Ninth and Tenth Commandments: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods"	197
LXX. The Commandments of the Church in general	200
LXXI. On the First and Second Commandments of the Church	203
LXXII. The Third Commandment of the Church: To keep the days of fasting and abstinence appointed by the Church	205
LXXIII. On Fasting	208
LXXIV. The Rules of Fasting	211
LXXV. Who are bound to fast and abstain	213
LXXVI. Fourth and Fifth Commandments of the Church: To go to Confession at least once a year; to re- ceive the Blessed Sacrament at least once a year, and that at Easter or thereabouts	214
LXXVII. Sixth Commandment of the Church: Not to marry within certain degrees of kindred, nor to solemnise marriage at the forbidden times	217

PART III.

On Hope, and the Means of Grace.

LXXVIII. On Hope	220
LXXIX. Of Prayer	225
LXXX. Invocation of the Saints and Angels	232
LXXXI. The Lord's Prayer: First Part	235
LXXXII. The Lord's Prayer: Second Part	242
LXXXIII. Of the Hail Mary	248
LXXXIV. On Devotions in honour of the Blessed Virgin	252
LXXXV. On Grace	255
LXXXVI. On the Division of Grace	258
LXXXVII. On the Distribution of Grace	260
LXXXVIII. On Habitual Grace	261
LXXXIX. On Merit	264
XC. On the Sacraments	266
XCI. On Baptism: its Definition, Institution, Neces- sity, Matter, Form, &c.	274

CHAP.	PAGE
XCII. On the Effects of Baptism	277
XCIII. On the Dispositions and Ceremonies of Baptism	281
XCIV. On Confirmation: its Definition, Institution, Matter, Form, Minister, Subject, Obligation, and Dispositions	283
XCV. On the Effects and Ceremonies of Confirmation	288
XCVI. On the Holy Eucharist: its Definition, Matter, and Form	291
XCVII. The Doctrine of the Church upon the Holy Eucharist	298
XCVIII. Proofs of the Doctrine in Holy Scripture	296
XCIX. The Effects of the Holy Eucharist	301
C. On the Dispositions necessary for receiving Communion	304
CI. On the obligation of receiving Communion	306
CII. On the Minister of the Holy Eucharist	306
CIII. On Devotions connected with the Blessed Sacrament	307
CIV. On the Holy Eucharist as a Sacrifice	313
CV. On the relation of the Sacrifice of the Eucharist to other Sacrifices	317
CVI. On the ends of the Sacrifice of the Mass	318
CVII. On those who offer the Sacrifice	321
CVIII. On the Sacrament of Penance: its Nature, Institution, and Matter	321
CIX. On the Examination of Conscience	324
CX. On Contrition: its Necessity and Nature	326
CXI. Of a Purpose of Amendment	330
CXII. Contrition and Attrition contrasted	333
CXIII. On the means of obtaining Contrition	334
CXIV. On Confession: its Necessity and Qualities	338
CXV. Of the manner in which Confession should be made	342
CXVI. On Satisfaction	345
CXVII. On Indulgences	348
CXVIII. On the Minister of Penance, and its Effects	353
CXIX. On Extreme Unction: its Nature, Institution, Matter, Form, and Subject	356
CXX. Effects of Extreme Unction, and its Minister	358
CXXI. On Holy Orders: its Nature, Institution, Matter, and Form	359
CXXII. On the Effects of the Sacrament of Orders: its Minister, and the Dispositions required for it	364
CXXIII. Of Matrimony: its first Institution	366
CXXIV. Of Matrimony as a Sacrament: its Nature, Institution, Matter, Form, Minister, and Subject	368
CXXV. Of the Indissolubility of Marriage	370
CXXVI. Of the Effects, Dispositions, and Ceremonies of the Sacrament of Matrimony	372

INSTRUCTIONS

IN

CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

PART FIRST.

FAITH.

CHAP. I. Introduction to the Creed, or the Theological Virtues in general, with a particular account of Faith.

It is seldom or never that we meet with grown-up persons who have not at least a general notion and conviction of the elementary truths which form the basis of religious knowledge. All who have come to the use of reason know that there is a God, a distinction between good and evil, and a future life, in which we shall be rewarded or punished according to our deserts. With this starting-point, one who seriously reflects will naturally ask himself this question, What am I to do to be saved? What is required in order that I may escape the punishments of a future life and secure its rewards? This most important question might be answered in different forms of words. We might answer as our Blessed Lord did the young man in the Gospel, "Keep the Commandments;" or as St. Peter answered those whose hearts were moved to compunction at his preaching, "Do penance, and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts ii. 38). That is, dispose yourselves, by sincere repentance, to obtain the forgiveness of past sin, and become Christians by the reception of bap-

tism. Or again, salvation is promised to the practice of particular virtues, as faith, hope, charity, almsgiving, prayer; either because these virtues naturally lead to, or else presuppose, all others.

But all the special answers which are given to the question with which we are dealing are included in the general answer given in the Catechism. To save our soul "we must worship God by faith, hope, and charity, that is, we must believe in Him, hope in Him, and love Him with our whole heart." By faith we honour the veracity of God, and submit our reason to His sovereign truth; by hope we acknowledge His power and His fidelity to His divine promises, and regard Him as the source of all the good which we should desire to obtain both here and hereafter; and by charity we conform our will to the most holy will of God. The sum of our religious knowledge consists in understanding how we are to worship God by faith, hope, and charity. Faith teaches us what we are to believe; and, in connexion with this subject, the explanation of the Apostles' Creed will find its appropriate place. Charity teaches us what we are to do, and is exercised in keeping the Commandments: under this head, therefore, it will be natural to treat of the decalogue and the precepts of the Church. Hope points to the means and helps which the divine goodness affords us in our journey towards heaven. In connexion with Hope, therefore, Grace, Prayer, and the Sacraments will be spoken of.

Faith, Hope, and Charity are called theological virtues, because they relate immediately to God. All virtues have a certain relation to God as the fountain and source of all good, but the immediate object of most virtues is something distinct from God. To make the meaning of this perfectly clear, it is necessary to state that by the object of a virtue we understand the matter on which it is exercised. Most children are familiar with what are termed object-lessons. They are shown the picture of some animal, as, for example, a lion, and are taught a variety of particulars about its nature and qualities. Now, in the same way as we should say the lion was the object of this lesson, so do we say God is the object of the theological vir-

tues. Thus the principal and immediate matter on which our faith is exercised is God and His divine attributes; the direct and immediate object of hope is the future possession of God in heaven; and the direct and immediate object of charity is God as the perfection of all that is good and amiable.

The theological virtues therefore relate immediately to God, inasmuch as they have God for their object; but they also relate immediately to God, inasmuch as they have God for their motive. Thus we believe the various truths of faith, because God, who is the sovereign truth, who can neither deceive nor be deceived, has revealed all these things to His Church. We hope to enjoy God hereafter in heaven, because He has promised to assist us in the performance of our duty towards Him in this life, and to reward our fidelity in His service by the eternal possession of Himself. We love God because, for His own infinite perfections, He is most worthy of our love.

But if it be necessary that the theological virtues should have God for their object and God for their motive, how is it that we believe what may be called the secondary truths of faith, *e. g.* those relating to the Church, to purgatory, to saints and angels? or how is it that we hope for grace, or even temporal blessings? or how, again, is it that we love our neighbour as ourselves? The observation of St. Thomas in reference to charity will apply to the other theological virtues. He tells us the habit of charity extends not only to the love of God, but also to the love of our neighbour; and that the act by which we love our neighbour for God's sake is of the same nature as the act by which we love God. To love our neighbour for God's sake necessarily includes an act of the love of God in Himself. A fond mother loves the nurse who is attentive and kind to her child; but because she loves the nurse for the sake of her child, her love belongs rather to the child than to the nurse. So is it with the exercise of the theological virtues. If we believe certain truths because God has revealed them, by that same act we necessarily believe in God; if we hope from the goodness and promises of God for the means and helps which are necessary for us to

work out our salvation, we thereby hope for the future possession and enjoyment of God Himself; and if we love any thing for God's sake, by the very same act we love God.

CHAP. II. Faith, its Nature and Qualities.

FAITH is to believe without doubting whatever God teaches. There are many grounds on which our various opinions and judgments rest. Some truths, for instance, are self-evident, and for this reason cannot be doubted; others are deduced from such as are self-evident, or well known by way of inference or demonstration; other things we know because we were present when they happened, or have seen them; and, in fine, there are things which we do not know of ourselves, but which we believe on trustworthy testimony. If, then, we believe such things on the testimony of men, it is human or historical faith; if we believe on the Revelation, or the Word of God, it is divine faith, or faith in its theological sense. Faith, then, is a firm adherence to the doctrine which God has revealed, or it is believing on His testimony. By faith we honour God in a twofold way, viz. (1) by acknowledging Him as the infinitely perfect Being made known to us by revelation; and (2) by believing on His veracity, or sovereign truth.

Such being the nature of faith, it will necessarily possess two qualities;—it will be firm and entire.

1. As the sovereign truth of God, which is pledged in support of revelation, is the highest possible testimony which we can have, the adherence of our mind to the truth revealed by God should be firm and unwavering.

2. Our faith must also be entire; that is, it must include all the truths which have been revealed. If we doubt or deny any single truth which we know has been revealed by God, we virtually call in question the divine veracity, and so destroy the foundation on which all faith rests. Here the question will naturally occur, How is the faith of the poor ignorant Catholic as entire as that of a priest who is learned in theology? In reply, we must explain that there are two ways in which we believe the

truths of revelation, viz. (1) we may have a distinct knowledge of each separate article, and give an explicit assent to each distinct doctrine; or (2) we may believe a number of doctrines in the mass as implied or contained in some general truth of revelation. Thus the theologian will know and believe each separate article, while the illiterate Catholic is instructed in a few fundamental and practical points, and accepts the rest as included in the general belief of all which the Church teaches. The former is called explicit, and the latter implicit faith.

It may also be asked whether the truths of faith rest on the authority of the Church. The Church is the divinely appointed guardian and interpreter of the deposit of revealed truth, and the ordinary channel by which we ascertain the fact of what truths have been revealed, but our faith is grounded on the authority of God as the author of revelation. To understand the office of the Church as the witness to the fact of revelation, take the following illustration: I want to know whether a document which I possess is drawn up with all the legal formalities required by the laws of my country; I accordingly send it by the hands of a friend, on whose intelligence and honour I can thoroughly rely, to an eminent lawyer, and receive a verbal reply. In this case, my friend simply makes known to me the opinion of the lawyer; but the importance which I attach to that opinion rests not on the testimony of my friend, but on the learning and knowledge of the lawyer. So is it with faith. The Church tells me what truths have been revealed, and then I accept them on the testimony of God. Thus she never makes a new article of faith, but, as occasions arise, she simply declares that such or such truths have been revealed by God from the beginning.

But how do we come to the possession of faith? Those who are properly and validly baptised receive, together with the character of Christians, the habit of faith, or a power or faculty which enables them, when they come to the use of reason, and are instructed in revealed truth, to elicit acts of faith. The habit of faith may be compared to conscience. In the same way as our conscience tells us

that certain things are right and others wrong, however ill qualified we are to reason on the subject, and to convince others, so the habit of faith enables us clearly to see and firmly to hold the truths of religion. All who have been baptised receive the habit of faith; but if, after coming to the use of reason, they wilfully reject the truth, or cling to heresy, they forfeit the supernatural habit which was implanted at their baptism. Those who have never been baptised, or who have lost the habit of faith, arrive at the possession of faith in the following manner. By coming into contact with the Catholic religion, by examining the motives of credibility, or by the direct action of the illuminating grace of God on the soul, they see that it is their duty to accept the teaching of the Church as the revelation of God; and as grace is never wanting to those who are willing to make a good use of it, the Holy Spirit enables them to elicit corresponding acts of divine faith.

CHAP. III. The Necessity of Faith.

ST. PAUL tells us (Heb. xi. 6), without faith it is impossible to please God; and our Lord Himself, in the commission which He gave His Apostles to preach the Gospel, has clearly laid down the necessity of faith for salvation: "Go ye into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth, and is baptised, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned" (St. Mark xvi. 15, 16). The necessity of faith to salvation being clear, the question arises, How much faith is necessary? It is evident from the nature of faith that all the revealed truths of God must be believed with implicit faith. After our Lord had commissioned the Apostles to teach the whole world, to observe all things whatsoever He had commanded, He added, "And he that believeth not" (viz. all things which He had commanded) "shall be condemned." (Compare St. Matt. xxviii. and St. Mark xvi.) But if implicit faith in all revealed truth be necessary, it is equally clear that all are not required to have a distinct knowledge, and to make an explicit act of belief

in each separate truth. The three thousand converts who were added to the Church after St. Peter's first sermon could only have been instructed in a few general truths. Our inquiry therefore is, what amount of explicit faith is required in all who have come to the use of reason? or in other words, what are the articles of faith which all are obliged to know? Before answering this question, we must explain the difference between what we are bound to believe as a necessary condition to salvation, and what we are simply commanded to believe. When we say that any thing is a necessary condition to salvation, we mean that its absence, even though it be without any fault on our part, is sufficient to exclude us from heaven. Thus baptism, either in reality or desire, is a necessary condition to salvation, because if a child die without baptism, even when there has been no fault in the omission, that child cannot go to heaven. But when we say simply that we are commanded to do something in order to be saved, we mean that the obligation exists as soon as the precept is made known to us. If, however, a person, without any fault on his part, were to live and die in ignorance of such a command, he would not in any way be accountable for it.

The question, then, to be considered is twofold :

1. What articles of faith are all required to know, and to believe with explicit faith, as indispensable conditions of salvation?

2. What amount of religious knowledge are all commanded to possess?

In answer to the first part of the inquiry, St. Paul declares that all are required to believe in God, and a future state of rewards and punishments. "He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and is a rewarder to them that seek Him" (Heb. xi. 6). So much, then, is certainly required; and it is held by the greater number of theologians that we are also required, after the coming of our Lord, to believe as a necessary condition to salvation the mysteries of the Blessed Trinity, and of the incarnation and death of Christ.

2. All are commanded to know, in substance at least,

and to believe with explicit faith, the Apostles' Creed, the Our Father and Hail Mary, the Ten Commandments, and the commandments of the Church, and such of the Sacraments as they are required to receive.

CHAP. IV. Exercise of Faith.

WE are bound to elicit internal acts of faith :

1. As soon as we come to the use of reason, and are instructed in the truths of revelation.

2. When we have to perform any duty for which an act of faith is a necessary disposition ; for instance, when we have to receive a Sacrament.

3. When the exercise of faith is practically our only means of resisting and overcoming temptation.

4. We are also bound to make acts of faith frequently during our life. To omit this duty entirely for a long time would be a grievous sin. The obligation, however, of making acts of faith is fulfilled as often as we pray, or assist at Mass, or perform other religious duties with proper dispositions.

5. Finally, we are bound to elicit acts of faith at the hour of death.

Besides this interior exercise of faith, we are also bound to make an external profession of our faith. This obligation implies that (1) we should never, under any circumstances, deny our religion, even in appearance ; for our Blessed Lord has said, "He that shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven" (St. Matt. x. 33). But though it is never lawful to deny our faith, we are not bound to parade it before the notice of others. If we have any good reason, we may conceal our religion, provided we use no improper means to accomplish our object.

(2) The obligation of professing our faith requires us openly to avow it as often as God's honour, our own or our neighbour's good demands it. "Every one that shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven" (St. Matt. x. 32). Thus

we are bound to confess our faith when interrogated by tyrants and persecutors; when by our silence wicked men are encouraged in blaspheming the faith; when we know our example is necessary to prevent our neighbour from denying the faith or committing any grievous sin; and finally, when we are obliged to choose between openly avowing our faith, or doing something which our conscience condemns.

CHAP. V. Sins against Faith.

WE have seen in the last section that we are bound inwardly to believe and outwardly to profess the faith and law of Christ, and the particular occasions have been pointed out in which we are bound to exercise this faith. To neglect to make acts of faith under the circumstances which have been enumerated would therefore render us guilty in the sight of God. These are the sins against faith which are committed by persons who still remain members of the Church. The sins of which we are about to speak, for the most part imply a separation from the Church. The meaning of this will be more clearly apprehended by explaining that the sins here spoken of are committed not so much by neglecting the exercise, as by neglecting to obtain or preserve the possession of faith. The various sins which the absence of faith implies are all included under the general name of infidelity or unbelief, and may be classified under three distinct species, viz. Paganism, Judaism, and Heresy.

1. There are some persons to whom the truths of faith have never been sufficiently proposed. They have never had the opportunity of knowing the true religion, nor has the obligation of searching into the truth or of entering the Church been brought home to their conscience. Such persons as these are not accountable for the absence of faith, because, as we are supposing, their want of faith as such is accompanied with no moral fault. The truth of this statement is implied in the words spoken by our Lord in reference to those among whom He had preached and wrought His miracles: "If I had not come and spoken to

them, they would not have sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin" (St. John xv. 22).

2. There are other persons to whom the truths of religion have been so far manifested as to render them inexcusable, like many of the Jews of whom our Saviour spoke in the passage just cited. They have received sufficient light to know the truth, or at least to understand the danger of their position, and the obligation which is incumbent upon them to continue their inquiries and to seek further instruction. It is clear, then, they will be accountable to God, if, through religious indifference or sloth, through the fear of any temporal loss, or the hope of any temporal gain, or through any other motive, they refuse to follow the guidance of the light which is given them. And here it may be observed that ignorance of the truths which we are commanded to know is a sin which is committed by those who are members of the Church as well as by unbelievers. Its guilt is incurred (1) by parents and superiors who neglect to procure for their children, or those under their charge, the necessary religious instruction; and (2) by all persons who through their own fault grow up in ignorance of the truths which they are bound to know.

3. Again, there are persons who not only neglect to clear up their doubts, and to coöperate with the light which they receive, but who still persist in their errors, and refuse to embrace the truth after they have been sufficiently instructed in the faith.

These three different states of mind must be carefully remembered in estimating how far persons are culpable who do not actually possess the true faith. Whatever may be the kind of unbelief to which they belong, if the obligation of embracing the true religion has never crossed their minds, they will not be answerable for the simple absence of faith; but they will be judged according to the light of reason and conscience which has been implanted within them. If, however, they belong to the second or third class of persons spoken of, that is, if through their own fault they have neglected to discover the truth, or if after finding it they have rejected it, they are

guilty in the sight of God, and answerable for the consequences.

It has been already stated that there are three kinds or species of unbelief, viz. Paganism, Judaism, and Heresy. By Paganism we understand the state of those who are altogether without faith, both in reality and profession. To this class belong Atheists, who deny the existence of God: Idolaters, who worship false gods: Deists, who believe the existence of God, but deny His providence and reject all revelation, and Mahometans, or the disciples of Mahomet.

Judaism is the religious system of the Jews, who cling to the Mosaic law, and admit the Messiah in figure and prophecy, but refuse to acknowledge the reality.

Heresy is the rejection of one or more revealed truth by one who has been baptised and has professed the Christian religion. It has been implied in the observations already made, that the errors against faith contained in the different classes of sins just enumerated are only imputed as sins when they are in some way wilful. How far the particular persons who are living in Paganism, Judaism, or Heresy, have had the opportunity of knowing better, is a question of fact which will not at present be considered. It may, however, be well to state two general principles applicable to them: 1. Where there is no wilful fault, there is no sin; and consequently when the obligation of believing has been in no way made manifest, a simple error of judgment will not be visited as a crime. 2. If, however, the truths of revelation have been sufficiently made known, to refuse to believe them is one of the greatest sins which we can commit. To reject what we know has been revealed by God is not merely to cut ourselves off from the benefits of religion, but it is virtually to call in question the divine veracity. If men consider it an unpardonable offence to have their own truthfulness called in question, what must it be to question the truth of God?

The one foundation on which all revealed truth rests is the divine veracity; and hence, if we reject any single revealed truth, we in reality reject the foundation of all faith.

Wilful heresy on any one point, therefore, destroys all faith, in the same way as every mortal sin, of whatever kind, robs the soul of charity or the state of grace. Hence we infer that the sin of apostasy, or the renunciation of the Christian religion by one who has been baptised, differs only in degree, and not in its nature, from the sin of heresy. We may also infer that doubts in matters of faith imply the guilt of heresy; for to doubt is to hesitate, and to suspend our judgment between two opposite statements. But if we wilfully doubt the truth of what we know has been revealed by God, we in reality question His knowledge or His veracity, and so are guilty of heresy.

CHAP. VI. Mysteries of Faith.

It has already been stated that God is the principal object of our faith. Now God is an infinitely perfect Being;—He is infinite in all His attributes, and consequently must be incomprehensible to our finite minds. Religion, then, or faith, which is to teach us about God and His divine attributes, must necessarily contain things which we cannot understand. These revealed truths of religion which surpass our comprehension are what we call the Mysteries of Faith. If, then, we have faith at all, we must believe in mysteries. Nor is this unreasonable; for if those who are ignorant of law or medicine act reasonably in following the professional opinions of lawyers or doctors, how much more reasonably do we act in believing on the testimony of God, who knows infinitely better than we do, and who can neither deceive nor be deceived!

The difficulty which many persons have respecting the belief of mysteries arises from a mistaken idea of the nature of mysteries or of faith. They sometimes imagine that a mystery is contrary to reason and experience, whereas, in reality, it is simply something above reason and beyond our experience. Reason and experience do not contradict mysteries, but are simply silent on the subject. The meaning of this assertion will be more clearly understood by an illustration. Suppose a person has been

born blind or deaf, but yet has the perfect use of reason and of all his other senses. If I speak to this blind man of colour, it is a thing which he does not understand, and of which he has had no experience; it is a mystery to him; still he would be clearly mistaken if he refused to believe on the testimony of those who can see. Again, if by means of signs we were able to give the deaf man an idea of sound, he would not understand us. He possesses no faculty by which he can judge of sound; and, as he has had no experience of any thing of the kind, he might imagine it was contrary to his reason and his senses to admit the existence of such a phenomenon. In such a case we see clearly he would be wrong in supposing sound was something contrary to his reason and senses, and in disbelieving the testimony of competent authority on the subject. So, too, is it with mysteries. They are truths of which we can form no judgment, so long as we are deprived of the light of faith. But still our assent to these hidden truths rests on a solid foundation. We have no evidence of the same kind as we require in a mathematical demonstration to establish the truth of mysteries; but we have abundant evidence to prove the fact that God has revealed them, and we know that what God has revealed must of necessity be true.

CHAP. VII. Of the Creeds sanctioned by the general use of the Church.

THE last chapter having been occupied with the general questions touching faith, the next thing is to treat in detail of the truths which faith teaches. The doctrines of the Catholic Church have been at different times collected together in an abridged form for the use of the faithful. Some of these formularies of faith have either been expressly drawn up by the Church, or have received the sanction of her infallible authority, and therefore deserve a particular notice introductory to the explanation of the Apostles' Creed.

1. The most ancient summary of the doctrines of the

Catholic Church is that which is known as the Apostles' Creed. It is believed that the Apostles, before separating into different parts of the world to preach the Gospel, composed the Creed known by their name. In this way the faithful could be more easily instructed; the unity of the faith throughout the world would be more clearly manifested; the disciples of our Lord by this outward declaration of their belief would be distinguished from unbelievers; and the faith of the simple and ignorant preserved inviolate. Some have supposed that St. Paul alludes to the Apostles' Creed in his exhortation to Timothy: "Hold the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me in faith, and in the love which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. i. 13). St. Irenæus, whose master, St. Polycarp, was a disciple of St. John, speaks of the Apostles' Creed in the following terms: "The Church dispersed through the whole world has received that faith from the Apostles, and their disciples, which is in one God, the Father Almighty," &c. (S. Iren. *Adversus Hæreses*, lib. i. cap. 10).

2. As heresies arose which, while they accepted the words of the Apostles' Creed, yet denied some of the truths of faith, it became necessary to introduce a summary of the doctrines of the Church, which should contain, in clear and unmistakable language, the articles which began to be controverted. Thus when Arius began to propagate his heresy, denying the Divinity of Jesus Christ, a General Council was held at Nice, in the year 325, in which Arius was condemned, and the Creed composed, which is thence called the Nicene Creed. After expressing the belief of the Church in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible, it proceeds thus to speak of the doctrine which had been called in question: "And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, born of the Father,"—that is, of the substance of the Father,—“born, not made; consubstantial with the Father, by whom all things were made, which are in heaven or on earth. Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down, and was incarnate and made man. He suffered, and rose again the third day, and as-

cended into heaven. And He will come again to judge the living and the dead. And in the Holy Ghost."

After the Divinity of Jesus Christ and His consubstantiality with the Father had been vindicated in the Council of Nice, another General Council was held at Constantinople, A. D. 381, to proclaim the Divinity of the Holy Ghost, against the heresy of the Macedonians and Eusebians. In this Council a few verbal explanations were introduced into the Nicene Creed; and after the words above cited, "And in the Holy Ghost," were added, "the Lord and the life-giver, proceeding from the Father, and together with the Father and the Son to be adored and glorified; who spoke by the prophets. And (I believe) one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. I confess one baptism for the remission of sins. And I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen." On account of the additions which were made on this occasion, the Nicene Creed thus enlarged is sometimes called the Creed of Constantinople. Finally, the same reason which made these additions and explanations necessary induced the Church to make a few further additions, (the principal of which was the declaration of the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son,) before this Creed assumed the exact form of words which are now read in the Mass.

3. The Athanasian Creed is another summary of faith which has been adopted by the Universal Church. Baronius, and some of the older writers, supposed it to be the production of St. Athanasius; but a more accurate criticism proves it of later date. Had it been the genuine work of St. Athanasius, it would not have omitted the word 'consubstantial,' nor would it have contained so precise and explicit a condemnation of the Nestorian and Eutychian heresies, which were not broached till after the death of St. Athanasius. It seems to have obtained its name from the fact that it has been attributed to St. Athanasius; or what is perhaps more likely, because it consists mainly of an explanation of the mysteries of the Blessed Trinity, and of the Incarnation,—doctrines which this great saint and doctor so strenuously defended. The

learned and accurate Alban Butler is of opinion that it was compiled in Latin in the fifth century.

4. The last of the great formularies of faith in general use throughout the Church, is the one which is known as the Creed of Pope Pius IV. This Creed was drawn up immediately after the Council of Trent, and consists of a repetition, word for word, of the Creed of Nice and Constantinople, followed by an enumeration of the principal doctrines defined in the Holy Council of Trent, in condemnation of the errors of the Reformers.

Although the Church uses these different Creeds, her doctrine is one and the same at all times. But as heresy is ever changing, as it sometimes attacks one and sometimes another revealed truth, it becomes necessary to warn the faithful against the particular errors which are prevalent at the time being, and to expound the truth more clearly on such points as are called in question by heretics and unbelievers, and about which the faith of the children of the Church is more likely to be endangered. But in the same way as the religious instruction which is given to children or illiterate persons varies in form and extent from that which is addressed to a full-grown and educated audience, while the truths which are taught and the duties which are enforced are the same, so the doctrine of the Church is one and the same, whether it be expressed in the brief summary of the Apostles' Creed, or in the more full and explicit declarations of the Creed of Pope Pius.

CHAP. VIII. The Apostles' Creed.

1. THE Apostles' Creed is sometimes divided into two parts, viz. the first eight articles which treat of God, and the four last which refer to the Church.

2. Again, it is divided into three parts, as it refers to the Three Divine Persons of the Blessed Trinity, and the works which are specially attributed to each of them. Thus the first article teaches us what we are to believe about the Father, or the first Person, and the work of creation, which is especially attributed to Him; the second

and following articles to the seventh inclusive, treat of the second Person and the work of the Redemption; the eighth and the concluding articles treat of the Holy Ghost, or third Person, and the works specially attributed to Him.

3. The most common division, however, is that which distributes it into twelve parts, according to the twelve distinct propositions or articles of which it is composed.

First Article: "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth."

When we say in common language that we believe any thing, we frequently mean no more than that we think so, or that such is our opinion; but in the Creed the words "I believe" are used to express the firm and undoubted assent of faith. We mean that we hold these doctrines as most certainly true, because God has revealed them. Our conviction is unwavering, not because the truths of religion are self-evident, like the axioms of human science, nor because we can prove their intrinsic truth by a process of demonstration, but because God, who can neither deceive nor be deceived, has told us they are true. We believe them simply on His testimony.

In this first article we are introduced to the great and fundamental mystery of the Unity and Trinity of God. By professing our belief in God, in the singular number, we proclaim that there is but one God; and when we speak of the Father, we necessarily imply the Son, and thus we arrive at the plurality of persons in God, and by implication at the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity.

1. Faith teaches us to believe in one self-existent all-perfect Being, who has had no beginning and will have no end. He possesses in Himself every perfection. He is every where present, and knows and sees every thing. He is independent, and every other being is dependent upon Him for its existence, and every thing which it possesses. He is almighty, all-wise, all-just. His providence watches over every thing which He has made. He takes an exact account of all our actions, and will reward the just and punish the wicked.

2. In this one incomprehensible and infinitely perfect Being there are Three distinct Persons,—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The Father proceeds from no one, the Son proceeds from the Father alone by an eternal generation, the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son. The Father from all eternity necessarily contemplated Himself, and so in His own divine mind formed an image of Himself, which embraced all His perfections. This image, which is necessarily substantial, real, and existing,—“the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the figure of His substance” (Heb. i.),—is the Son, omnipotent, eternal, most holy, most perfect, like the Father. The Father saw all His own immense perfections in the Son; the Son beheld His divine attributes in the Father; and both, united in mutual complaisance, and infinitely loving each other, produced the Holy Spirit, who is the substantial love of the Father and the Son; who proceeds alike from both, as from one principle, and who is equally eternal, infinite, most blessed, as the Father and the Son. These Three Divine Persons are really distinct, because the Father is not the Son, the Son is not the Father, and the Holy Ghost is neither the Father nor the Son; but though distinct from each other, they are in no way divided, and consequently there is but one only God. When we adore the Father, we adore the Son; and when we adore the Father or the Son, we adore the Holy Ghost. The Father is eternal, the Son is eternal, and yet He is begotten of the Father; the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son, and yet He is equally eternal, and the same God as they are. The Father is not more powerful than the Son, the Holy Ghost is equally powerful with the Father and the Son. We must believe that there are in God three distinct persons, without the plurality of persons multiplying the nature or essence, which is indivisibly one and the same in all the three; that there is an order of procession without priority of time or title of preëminence; that there is a real distinction of persons without any inequality of perfections. The Three Divine Persons are in every way equal; they each and all possess the same Divine nature, and yet are each distinct in their separate personality. “One is the

person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is all one; the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal. In this Trinity there is nothing before or after, nothing greater or less; but the whole three Persons are co-eternal together and co-equal: so that in all things the Unity is to be worshiped in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity."

The Blessed Trinity is the most incomprehensible of the Christian mysteries, and must be accepted with a simple, childlike faith, bowing our reason to the revelation of God. When we speak of the august mystery of the Blessed Trinity, of one undivided essence subsisting in three several persons,—of the Father, who is no more than the Son; of the Son, who has no dependence on the Father; and of the Holy Ghost, who, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is yet co-eternal and co-equal with them,—our reason stands amazed, is humbled, and veils itself like the angels whom the prophet saw around the throne of God. All experience, all examination, all curiosity is baffled before the greatness of this mystery. All that we can do is to acknowledge our ignorance, and this avowal, according to the expression of a holy father, is the only true confession of the Trinity. With St. Paul we exclaim, "O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are His judgments, and how unsearchable His ways!" (Rom. xi. 33.) As they who attempt to gaze steadfastly on the midday sun are dazzled by its brightness, and are unable to see any thing, so they who would search the majesty of the Blessed Trinity are overwhelmed with glory. But as the sun is not the less brilliant because its effulgence blinds the eye of the body, so the greatness of God is not the less infinitely perfect, because our reason is dazzled in attempting to approach the light inaccessible in which He is enthroned.

The word 'Father' in this article describes the first Person of the Blessed Trinity, who proceeds from no other, and from whom the Son proceeds by an eternal generation. As applied to God,—for instance, as used in the Lord's Prayer,—the word 'Father' has several distinct mean-

ings. God is the Father of all mankind by creation; He is, in a more intimate manner, the Father of those whom He has adopted into the household of the faith, and whom He has made His children and members of His Church by holy Baptism; and finally He is, in a still more special sense, the Father of all the just who are in the state of grace and friendship with Him. In these senses the word 'Father' applies equally to all the Three Divine Persons; but, as used in the first article of the Creed, its meaning is defined by being contrasted with the words, "His only Son, our Lord," which occur in the next article. The first Person is called Father, because He is the Father of the second, or in other words, because the Son proceeds from Him by an eternal generation.

We have already stated that God is infinite in all perfections. He possesses in the most eminent degree, as their source and fountain, all the excellences and endowments which are shared by His creatures. To express His infinite perfections, He is called eternal, immense, omniscient, omnipresent, most just, most holy. But instead of these or other attributes which belong to God, He is called in the Creed Almighty, which means that He can do all things whatever He pleases, and that nothing is impossible or difficult to Him. This word 'Almighty,' or all-powerful, is introduced into this article to convey to our minds a general idea of all the attributes and perfections of God; for according to St. Thomas omnipotence includes, or at least implies, all the other names and titles of preëminence which belong to God, such as His wisdom, His providence, His goodness, His mercy, His justice, His eternity, and His infinity in all perfections. The first Person of the Blessed Trinity is also called Almighty in the same way that He is called Creator, viz. because in the language of Holy Scripture the work of creation, and generally works of power, are attributed to the Father; works of wisdom and the Redemption to the Son; and the work of our sanctification to the Holy Spirit. In reality all the exterior works of God,—that is, every thing with the exception of that which constitutes the distinction of the Persons one from another, or every thing except the procession of one

from the other,—are common to all the Three Divine Persons.

CHAP. IX. The Creation.

BEFORE any part of the visible universe had any being,—before the sun, the moon, or stars, or the earth on which we dwell, was called into existence,—God was living in an eternity of unspeakable repose and happiness in the contemplation of His divine perfections. He stood in no need of creatures, but of His own free will He chose to manifest His power and magnificence in the creation of the world. It cost Him no labour to make all things out of nothing. He spoke, and they were made; He commanded, and they were created. He had only to will it, and all this visible universe, with its varied beauty and magnificence, sprang into being. Before, He alone existed; but at His beck, all creatures, with prompt obedience, presented themselves before Him.

God might have created all things at the same instant; but we learn from the sacred Scripture that the work of creation was extended over six successive periods of time, which are called days. Though many interpreters are of opinion that the six days of creation, like our days, were simply a duration of four-and-twenty hours each, there is nothing in the Mosaic narrative, or in the definitions of the Church, which forbids us to hold that they were six successive periods of indefinite duration. If, then, the discoveries of modern science prove that the world has existed much longer than six thousand years, such a fact would in no way contradict the sacred narrative. Knowing as we do the inspiration of holy Scripture, we are perfectly certain that though the truths of science may refute the private opinions and interpretations of men, they can never be at variance with the revelation of God. Science will probably continue to develop itself as it has hitherto done; its early conjectures, which cause dismay in religious minds, will be contradicted by its more mature judgments; but to whatever extent its study is prosecuted, we may

rest perfectly assured its ultimate conclusions will only strengthen the ground of our faith. So often has this been the case in the past, that scientific men ought to be above all others the most modest in raising objections against the foundations of revealed truth.

When the work of creation was completed, God did not abandon it to chance, but by His divine providence He continued to watch over and to preserve what He had made. The existence of this providence is a necessary consequence of the existence of God. An all-wise, all-powerful, all-good God would not act without a purpose, nor neglect the care of His own work. The creatures of God necessarily claim His love; and loving them as the Author of their being, His care extends to every one of them. So minute is this providence, that we are assured that "the very hairs of our head are all numbered" (St. Matt. x. 30).

"And God saw all the things that He had made, and they were very good" (Gen. i.). All the works of creation are pronounced good because they were all admirably adapted for the wise purposes for which they were designed. But as some of God's creatures were intended for a more noble end than others, and reflected more abundantly the Divine attributes, so were they more noble in their nature and endowments. The highest and most perfect among them are the angels and men, and of these it is fitting to speak more in detail.

CHAP. X. The Angels.

By the angels we mean pure spirits, created by God, and endowed with free will, with reason and understanding. Like us, they think, they reason, and understand, but in a far more perfect manner. Like us, they are free to choose one thing or reject another. They are pure spirits; that is, they have no bodies, nor any thing material or corporeal in their nature. We cannot see, hear, or touch them. Nor are they created, as our souls are, to be united to bodies or any thing material. If they are represented in

human shape, it is because they have assumed the appearances of bodies in order to manifest themselves to our senses, when they have been sent to execute the commissions of God. They are also represented with wings, but this is simply figurative, and intended to convey to our minds an idea of their qualities. They are said by the prophet to veil their faces with wings, to show their extreme humility and profound reverence in the sight of God. Their wings, too, represent the promptness with which they obey the Divine commands, and the rapidity with which they pass from one place to another. If we consider what is done by the more spiritualised agencies which belong to this material world,—if, for instance, we know that light travels some 200,000 miles in a second,—we shall be able to form some notion of the immense velocity with which these pure spirits pass from one extremity of creation to the other. The name ‘angel’ signifies a messenger or envoy, and expresses the office rather than the nature of these heavenly spirits.

We have no distinct account in the holy Scripture of the creation of the angels. Some of the Fathers are of opinion that the angels are included in the creation of heaven, mentioned in the first verse of Genesis: “In the beginning God created heaven.” Others think that the angels were called into being when God said, “Let there be light;” and they consider that the separation of the light from the darkness indicated the crowning of the good, and the condemnation of the fallen angels. These things, however, are matters of conjecture; but it is certain the angels were created before the sin of our first parents; for it was one of the fallen angels who assumed the form of the serpent to tempt Eve.

The exact number of the angels is nowhere mentioned, but it is always represented in the holy Scripture as very great. Thus our Lord says in the gospel (St. Matt. xxvi. 53), His heavenly Father could send in His defence more than twelve legions of angels. The Psalmist declares that the chariot of God is attended by ten thousand angels (Ps. lxxvii. 18). The prophet Daniel tells us in his vision of the Ancient of days, he saw a swift stream of

fire issuing forth before Him; "thousands of thousands ministered to Him, and ten thousand times a hundred thousand stood before Him" (Dan. vii. 10). Many of the Fathers, to give us an idea of the vast multitude of the angels compared with men, apply unto them the parable of the Lost Sheep. Jesus Christ, who is the good Shepherd, left the ninety-nine, who represent the angels in heaven, and came upon earth to seek the one which had gone astray; by which we are to understand the human race, whom our Lord came to redeem and save.

It appears from St. Paul (Eph. i. 21; Col. i. 16), that there is a gradation of rank, and a subordination of one to another among these blessed spirits. It is by no means certain that all the choirs of angels are enumerated in the Holy Scriptures; but the Fathers collect from the inspired writers that there are at least nine distinct orders; namely, Seraphim, Cherubim, and Thrones; Dominations, Principalities, and Powers; Virtues, Archangels, and Angels. The Seraphim, who are distinguished by their ardent love of God; the Cherubim, whose knowledge is almost boundless; and the Thrones, on whom God reposes with complacency,—form the highest class or hierarchy. The Dominations, Principalities, and Powers, in whom God's supreme dominion and strength and power are shadowed forth, constitute the middle hierarchy. The Virtues, Archangels, and Angels, who are God's instruments to perform His will, and His messengers to announce His good pleasure, and to execute His commissions, make up the lowest hierarchy of these blessed spirits.

The angels were created in the state of sanctifying grace, endowed with the supernatural gifts of faith, hope and charity, and were furnished with all the actual graces which were necessary to enable them to observe the Divine commandments. They did not, however, at once enjoy the Beatific Vision, but were placed in a state of probation, in which they might manifest their fidelity to their Creator. Lucifer, the brightest of these heavenly spirits, took pride in his own excellence; he said in his heart, "I will ascend into heaven; I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will ascend above the clouds; I will be

like the Most High" (Is. xiv. 13, 14). He drew after him in his revolt a third part of the heavenly host, who were forthwith precipitated into the bottomless abyss, and their "place was no more found in heaven" (Apoc. xii. 8).

The fall of the angels is most commonly described after this manner. When they appeared before God with Lucifer at their head, He made known to them the end for which they were created, viz. to love, honour, and serve Him during the short time of their probation, and, in recompense of their fidelity, to enjoy the Beatific Vision for ever in heaven. He revealed unto them the future incarnation of His divine Son, and commanded them to acknowledge as God, Jesus Christ, true God and true man, and to adore Him as their Lord and Master. Lucifer, full of pride, refused to submit his angelic nature to the human nature which was to be assumed by our Lord, and led as many as he was able to share his disobedience. St. Michael placed himself at the head of the faithful angels, and raising the battle-cry, "Who is like God?" drove Lucifer and his rebellious associates from heaven: "And there was a great battle in heaven; Michael and his angels fought with the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels; and they prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven, and the great dragon was cast out" (Apoc. xii. 7, 8). In consequence of their guilt, the fallen angels were condemned to a prison of everlasting fire. If we read that they come upon earth for the trial of the just and to entice us into sin, or if they are represented as filling the air, we are not to suppose they are freed from their torments, but, like one in a burning fever, they carry the fire of their sufferings with them whithersoever they go. Their malice against us, who are invited to take possession of the crowns which they have forfeited, is so great, that they are represented by St. Peter as going about like a roaring lion seeking to devour us, that is, to compass our eternal ruin by leading us into sin. But their power is very much restricted by God, without whose permission they can do nothing, and their designs are often frustrated by the ministrations of the good angels.

Such of the angels as remained faithful to God were

immediately crowned by Him with glory and honour, and admitted into the eternal possession of the joys of heaven. Their occupation in that bright kingdom is to praise and thank God because He is good, and His mercy endureth for ever. They are represented in holy Scripture as incessantly crying out in wondering adoration, "Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God of Hosts; all the earth is full of His glory" (Isa. vi. 3), which shineth forth in all His works. "They cease not day or night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was, and who is, and who is to come" (Apoc. iv. 8). Unlike Lucifer and his followers, they prostrate themselves before the Lamb who was slain from the foundation of the world, saying, with a loud voice, "The Lamb that was slain is worthy to receive power, and divinity, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and benediction" (Apoc. v. 12). God is all-powerful, and therefore stands in no need of the assistance of His creatures in the performance of His will; still we learn from the sacred Scripture that He has often been pleased to make use of angels in His providential dealings with mankind. Sometimes they are the ministers of His justice. Thus, after Adam and Eve were driven from Paradise, cherubim were placed with a flaming sword to guard its entrance (Gen. iii. 24). An angel was sent to rebuke the prophet Balaam (Gen. xxii.). An angel destroyed the army of the Assyrians (4 Kings xix. 35; 2 Paral. xxxii. 21). An angel struck Herod with a loathsome and fatal disease (Acts xii. 23). More frequently, however, they are the ministers of God's blessings. Thus an angel comforted Agar in her distress (Gen. xxi.). An angel stayed the hand of Abraham in the act of sacrificing his son (Gen. xxii.). Angels were seen by Jacob constantly ascending and descending between heaven and earth (Gen. xxviii. 12). At the bidding of angels, Moses (Acts vii. 30) and Gideon (Judges vi.) were raised up to deliver the children of Israel from the oppression of their enemies. An angel guided and protected the Israelites in their flight out of Egypt (Exod. xiv. 19). Angels delivered Lot from Sodom (Gen. xix.), the three children from the Babylonian furnace (Dan. iii. 49), Daniel from the lions' den (Dan. vi. 22), the Apostles

from their prison (Acts v. 19), and St. Peter from his captivity (Acts xii. 8). The law of Moses was given by angels (Acts vii. 53). St. Philip was led by an angel to instruct the eunuch (Acts viii. 26). An angel directed Cornelius to seek instruction from St. Peter (Acts x. 3, xi. 13). An angel fed the prophet Elias in his flight (3 Kings xix.). An angel protected Judith in the camp of Holofernes (Judith xiii. 20). The archangel Raphael brought many blessings on the family of the holy Tobias. Angels carried Lazarus into Abraham's bosom (Luke xvi. 23). The angels in heaven rejoice at the sinner's repentance (St. Luke xv. 10). The angels of little children always behold the face of God in heaven (St. Matt. xviii. 10). Angels have often been commissioned to make known future events. They foretold the birth of Isaac (Gen. xviii. 10), of Samson (Judges xiii.), of St. John the Baptist (St. Luke i.). They declared to Abraham that all nations would be blessed in his seed (Gen. xxii.). They made known to Daniel the time of the coming of the Messias, and many other prophecies (Dan. ix. x. xi.). They showed unto St. John many things regarding the future state of the Church (Apoc. i. 1).

Angels were employed in connexion with the principal mysteries of the Incarnation. Thus we read when the eternal Father introduced His only-begotten Son into the world, He commanded all the angels to adore Him (Ps. xcvi. 7; Heb. i. 5). An angel announced to the Blessed Virgin that she was chosen to be the Mother of God (St. Luke i.). An angel reassured St. Joseph, and made known to him the accomplishment of the Incarnation (St. Matt. i. 20). An angel manifested the birth of our Lord to the shepherds, and multitudes of them sang, "Glory to God on high, and peace on earth to men of good will" (St. Luke ii.). An angel warned St. Joseph in sleep to take the child Jesus and His mother, and fly into Egypt (St. Matt. ii. 13); and again admonished him to return after the death of Herod (v. 19). Angels ministered to our Lord after His temptation (St. Matt. iv. 2). An angel comforted Him in His agony (xxii. 43). Angels appeared at His resurrection (St. John xx. 12) and ascension (Acts

i. 10). Their hosts will attend Him when He comes in majesty to judge the world (St. Matt. xxv. 31).

The Holy Scripture seems to imply that empires, nations, provinces, cities, have each their particular angel guardians. Thus in Daniel (x. 21) St. Michael is spoken of as the protector of Israel; and now that the Christian Church has inherited the privileges of the synagogue, this glorious archangel is venerated as her special protector. In the same chapter (v. 13) mention is made of the prince of the kingdom of the Persians, by whom the holy Fathers understand the angel guardian of Persia. In the Acts of the Apostles (xvi. 9) we read that a man of Macedonia appeared to St. Paul, beseeching him and saying, "Pass over into Macedonia and help us," which is generally understood of the angel of Macedonia inviting St. Paul to preach in that province. St. John wrote his Apocalypse to the angels of the seven Churches of Asia, by which several of the Fathers understand not only the Bishops of those Churches, but likewise the angel guardians of their dioceses.

It is an article of faith that angels are deputed as the guardians and protectors of men; and though the Church has nowhere expressly defined that every one who is born into this world has a particular angel appointed to watch over and to assist him in his journey through life, this opinion is considered certain among all Catholics. Not only have those who are in the state of grace, or who are members of the Church, one of the blessed spirits of heaven to minister to their wants, but even heretics, unbelievers, pagans, and Jews, have all their special guardians to help them in the way of salvation. We have already cited a number of examples from the sacred writers of benefits bestowed on mankind by the ministry of angels; to these we further add one or two clear and explicit declarations. Thus the Psalmist (xc. 11), "He hath given His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. In their hands they shall bear thee up, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." St. Paul asks, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent to minister for them who shall receive the inheritance of salvation?" (Heb. i. 14.) Our Blessed Lord, referring more particularly to the guardian angels

of each individually, says, "See you despise not one of these little ones; for I say to you, that their angels in heaven always see the face of My Father who is in heaven" (St. Matt. xviii. 10).

CHAP. XI. The Creation of Man.

AFTER the fall of the angels, God created man to fill the thrones which they had forfeited. Like the angels, man is endowed with reason and free will. He is an intelligent being, consisting of a body and soul created to the image and likeness of God. It was on the sixth day that Adam, the first man, was created. In the rest of the work of creation God had simply said, "Let there be light; and there was light. Let there be a firmament made amidst the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters; and it was so." And in this same way He continued in the formation of the rest of the visible universe, till He came to man. But now the language of Holy Scripture is suddenly changed: "And God said, Let us make man to our image and likeness; and let him have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and the beasts, and the whole earth, and every creeping creature that moveth upon the earth" (Gen. i. 26).

In his first creation man was in a widely different state, both as regards his body and soul, from that in which we now behold him. We are subject to a variety of wants and miseries from which Adam in Paradise was altogether free. We suffer hunger and thirst, cold and heat, pains and sicknesses of every kind, and finally death. But from these trials and miseries Adam was exempt. His body, though mortal of its own nature, being composed of material parts which would naturally dissolve and fall into decay, was by a special favour of God made immortal: "For God created man incorruptible, and to the image of His own likeness He made him, but by the envy of the devil death came into the world" (Wisdom ii. 23, 24). Had he persevered faithfully in the service of God, he would have passed his earthly existence free from pain and sickness, and would have been translated to heaven without death.

So also in his soul he was in a far more perfect state than that in which we enter into this world. He was not only free from all guilt and all the consequences of sin, but his soul was adorned with supernatural gifts of grace and virtue, which made him pleasing in the sight of God, and capable of enjoying hereafter the Beatific Vision in heaven. Besides sanctifying grace, he also received abundance of actual graces, to see and to know the will of God, and to enable him to fulfil it. But this state of innocence and joy was not of long duration. The devil was jealous at beholding so much happiness, and assuming the form of the serpent, the most "subtle of all the beasts of the earth which the Lord God had made," he tempted Eve to transgress the commandment which God had given them: "And the woman saw that the tree was good to eat, and fair to the eyes, and delightful to behold; and she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave to her husband, who also did eat" (Gen. iii. 6). "Thus sin entered into this world, and by sin death, and so death passed upon all men" (Rom. v. 12).

After the sin of our first parents God might have dealt with them as He had already done with the rebel angels: but out of His infinite goodness and loving-kindness He was pleased to show mercy, and to give them an opportunity of repentance. It is true they were banished from Paradise, and subjected to the ills of our suffering humanity, but they were not hopelessly condemned like the angels. It is true that no acts of repentance of which they were capable would suffice to restore them to the friendship of God; but a future Redeemer was promised, by whose merits mankind might recover their lost innocence, and their title to the kingdom of heaven. The terrible words in which God denounced upon them their punishment were even preceded by the promise, that from the seed of the woman one would come who should crush the serpent's head (Gen. iii. 15). As after the Fall no one could be saved except through the merits of Jesus Christ, the coming of a future Redeemer was at once made known, in order that by faith in Him, and by the union of their actions with His merits and satisfaction, all might have the means of salvation.

A further account of the state of original justice, and of the effects of Adam's sin, is reserved till the explanation of the tenth Article. It belongs to the historical division of religious instruction to treat of the condition of our first parents and of their descendants after the Fall, and to trace the types, and figures, and prophecies, by which the faith in a Redeemer to come was kept alive, and by which mankind were prepared to recognise Him in Jesus Christ, the second person of the most adorable Trinity made man for us.

CHAP. XII.

Second Article : "And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord."

HAVING expressed our faith in God the Father, the first Person, we come next to speak of the second Person, of His consubstantiality and equality with the Father, according to His Divine nature, of His incarnation and birth into this world, and of His sufferings and death on the cross for our redemption and salvation.

The second Person of the Blessed Trinity is spoken of in the sacred Scripture as the Son of God, as the Eternal Word or Wisdom of the Father, and as the Messias. But after He was made man to redeem and save us, the name which is most commonly applied to Him is Jesus Christ. This holy name expresses the office which our Lord has taken upon Himself in relation to us; for the name 'Jesus,' which the angel brought from heaven, when he came to announce the mystery of the Incarnation to our Blessed Lady, and to solicit her consent to its fulfilment, signifies Saviour: "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb; and shalt bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus" (St. Luke i. 31). The meaning of this name is fully expressed in the words which the angel addressed unto St. Joseph: "Joseph, son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus. For He shall save His people from their sins" (St. Matt. i. 21). As we are redeemed and saved through our Lord's most pre-

cious blood, the name Jesus, or Saviour, was appropriately given to Him on the day of His circumcision, when He first began to shed His blood for us : "After eight days were accomplished, that the child should be circumcised, His name was called Jesus, which was called by the angel before He was conceived in the womb" (St. Luke ii. 21).

The word 'Christ,' which signifies anointed or consecrated, is also applied unto God the Son made man for us, because He is our King, Priest, and Prophet; and such in the old law received a special anointing or consecration to show that they were set apart, in a special manner, for the dignity and office to which they were called. By redeeming us from sin and the power of the evil one, Jesus Christ has acquired a new title to reign over us. We who were already His by creation are now His by purchase; we doubly belong to Him, because, after creating us, He has also paid the price of our ransom. He is a Priest, in having once offered Himself a sacrifice for us on the Cross, and continuing daily to offer Himself by the ministry of His priests in the Mass. He is also a Prophet in the twofold sense of the word, namely, as being our teacher and instructor in things which relate to God, and likewise as foretelling things to come. But if our Lord is called 'Anointed,' it is not by human hand, nor with material oil, that He received His consecration, but by the command of God in testimony of His super-eminent dignity and office. He was spiritually anointed by the power of the Holy Ghost, who poured out upon Him the richest abundance of divine grace. "He is so much better than the angels," says St. Paul, "as He hath inherited a more excellent name than they." For to "angels indeed He saith, He that maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire. But to His Son, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of justice is the sceptre of Thy kingdom. Thou hast loved justice and hated iniquity; therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows" (Heb. i.).

The name 'Jesus,' which is emphatically called holy, is entitled to a special reverence above what is given

to any other name which is applied to God. It expresses the humility of our Lord in His Incarnation, by which, as the Apostle says, "He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and in habit found as a man. He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even to the death of the Cross. For which cause God also hath exalted Him, and hath given Him a name which is above all names; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father" (Philip. ii. 7-10). It is in consequence of the special honour that God requires us to show to the holy Name, that we bow the head as often as it is repeated. Jesus is a name of salvation; for, as St. Peter assures us (Acts iv. 12), "there is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved." Through this name we may obtain all that we ask for: "Amen, amen, I say to you, if you ask the Father any thing in My name, He will give it you. Hitherto you have not asked any thing in My name. Ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full" (St. John xvi. 23, 24). It is a name of power which works the most wonderful miracles: "In My name," says our Blessed Saviour, "they (His disciples) shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they shall drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay their hands upon the sick, and they shall recover" (St. Mark xvi. 17, 18). Hence, the holy Name is invoked with well-placed confidence in the time of temptation, a number of indulgences are attached to its devout use by the faithful, and a special festival instituted in its honour.

"His only Son, our Lord." These words are used, in reference to the second Person of the Blessed Trinity, in the same way that the word 'Father' is applied to the first Person. They imply that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, proceeds from the Father by an eternal generation, and is consubstantial and coeternal with Him. If we are asked to explain more distinctly the manner in which

the Son proceeds from the Father, we answer, this is a part of the hidden mystery of the Blessed Trinity, which must for ever remain incomprehensible to our finite understanding. "Who," exclaimed the prophet Isaias, "shall declare His generation?" (Is. liii. 8.) But though we cannot hope to fathom this divine mystery, the following comparison will perhaps bring the doctrine more clearly before our minds. When a person looks at a mirror, an image is immediately formed, which represents with the greatest fidelity not only every feature and lineament, but even every action and motion of the body. This image is produced without time, without labour, without instruments. A simple momentary glance is sufficient to complete it in all its perfection. So the Father, contemplating Himself from all eternity in the mirror of His divine nature, produced a living and most perfect image of Himself. Unlike any thing which we behold, this image is real and substantial; yea, of the selfsame substance as its prototype, yet distinct in its personality or mode of existence. Hence the Father and the Son are equal in all things, or, as our Lord says, "I and the Father are one" (St. John x. 30). That is, though distinct Persons, both possess one and the same divinity.

Finally, in the second Article, Jesus Christ is called 'our Lord.' As He is one and the same God with the Father, He is equally with the Father, our Lord and Master, by reason of creation, and of the sovereign dominion which God possesses over all things. But Jesus Christ is in a more special sense our Lord, because He has redeemed us from the curse of the fall. By sin we had become the slaves of the devil, but, by undergoing the penalty which we had deserved, Jesus Christ has restored us to our liberty as the servants and children of God. By the ransom which He has paid for us, He has acquired a new title to our love and service. He is likewise called our Lord, because He has been given unto us: "for God so loved the world as to give His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting" (St. John iii. 16). It is, therefore, by His Incarnation that He has become our Lord. In

the time of the Mosaic dispensation, we never speak of our Lord, but of God, the Lord God, the Almighty, the promised Messiah, or some equivalent expression, because at that time our redemption had not yet been accomplished.

CHAP. XIII. Of the Incarnation.

BEFORE entering on the explanation of the following articles of the Creed, it will be well for us to have before our minds a clear idea of the great mystery of the Incarnation. As all mankind descend from Adam, all are involved in the consequences of his fall. We all come of a corrupt stock, and, being conceived and born in sin, the sentence of death is registered against us from the first moment of our existence. Had not the divine goodness interposed in our behalf, we must have been for ever excluded from the kingdom of heaven. But the Eternal Son of God, the second Person of the Blessed Trinity, was moved with compassion towards us, and took to Himself a body and soul like ours, in the unity of His one Divine Person; and in this His human nature He offered Himself a sacrifice to God for our sins. He substituted Himself in our place, and of His own free will underwent the penalty which we had deserved by our transgressions. He poured out the last drop of His most precious blood on the Cross to redeem and save us.

To enter more fully into the nature of this divine mystery, we should consider the guilt from which we have been redeemed. The grievousness of an offence increases according to the dignity of the person offended, and to the claims which he possesses to our love and service. Thus, for example, if we show marked disrespect to an inferior or an equal, it would of course be wrong; but still it would be a pardonable offence compared with the crime of showing the same disrespect to our sovereign. But if that sovereign had heaped all kinds of favours upon us, and we were indebted to his royal bounty for every thing which we possessed, our crime would be of the blackest dye. Applying this principle to

God, who is infinitely exalted above the highest of His creatures, and whose claims to our love and service infinitely transcend all other claims, we see that an offence against Him is not merely incomparably greater than an offence against any creature, but it contains, so far as is possible, an infinite malice, because it is an offence against a Being of infinite goodness and holiness. When once, therefore, we had fallen into the guilt of sin, we incurred a debt of infinite satisfaction to the Divine Majesty. We could not of ourselves attempt to discharge the obligation which we had contracted, because, before we could appease the outraged justice of God, we must needs be free from sin, and because any satisfaction which we could offer would necessarily fall far short of our debt. It is commonly held that God might have granted us a free pardon, without requiring any satisfaction to be made to His offended majesty; but it seems more consonant with His infinite justice, and certainly displays in a more wonderful manner His infinite goodness and mercy to us, to accomplish our deliverance, and, at the same time, to make an act of reparation strictly adequate to the demands of His justice.

God having therefore determined to exact an adequate atonement for the offence committed, it became necessary that one of the three Divine Persons should assume our nature, and make satisfaction for us. For as the offence was infinite, no merit of any mere creature would be sufficient; because no creature, however exalted, or however holy, could offer more than finite satisfaction. It was necessary, therefore, that our Redeemer should be at the same time God and man;—God, otherwise the satisfaction would not be infinite, and consequently would not be equal to the offence; and man, otherwise He could not immolate Himself for our ransom,—He could not suffer and die for us. The second Person of the Blessed Trinity, therefore, became man for us. After His Incarnation, He is perfect God and perfect man; that is, still retaining His divine nature in all its integrity, He took to himself, in the unity of His one Divine Person, all that is required to constitute a perfect and complete human nature. He

became in all things like us, excepting sin. He assumed a real body like ours, and not merely the outward semblance of a body, such as the appearances with which angels were sometimes clothed when they were sent to execute the commissions of God to men. He assumed a real soul like ours, and a human will; for otherwise His human nature would have been incomplete, and the satisfaction which He offered imperfect. For our Lord came to join unto Himself that humanity in which Adam had sinned, in order that He might heal in His own person all that had been vitiated in the person of Adam. Now, as the soul and the will had the chief share in the sin of the fall, so likewise was it necessary that they should have the chief share in the act of reparation. Thus we learn from the sacred Evangelist, that the sufferings of our Saviour's passion and death commenced with His soul. "My soul," said He to His disciples, "is sorrowful even unto death" (St. Matt. xxvi. 38). And in the prayer which He made immediately afterwards He distinctly refers to His two wills: "My Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from Me. Nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt" (St. Matt. xxvi. 39). As God He possesses the selfsame will as His Father; and when His human will prompted Him to pray to be delivered from the bitterness of His passion, by an act of heroic resignation He immediately conformed it to His divine will: "Nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt." He suffered hunger and thirst, heat and cold, and was tired and wearied as we are by labour and fatigues. He had human affections like us. He loved with a special affection the virgin disciple St. John. He compassionated the suffering and afflicted. He wept over the grave of Lazarus, and over the city of Jerusalem, whose destruction He foresaw. He has two natures, therefore, the divine and human; two wills and two distinct operations; but still He is one Christ,—one, not by the two natures being in any way blended together, nor by one absorbing the other, but, both remaining perfectly distinct, they are united by subsisting in the one Divine Person of the Word. As in man there is a spiritual

substance mysteriously united to a material substance, so as to form but one person; so the divine and human natures, by means of the hypostatical or personal union, constitute the one Person of Christ, who is at the same time true God and true man. "As the reasonable soul and the flesh," says the Athanasian Creed, "is one man, so God and man is one Christ." The existence of the two natures in Christ shows us how we are to explain the assertions of Holy Scripture respecting Him, which seem to contradict each other. Thus when our Lord says (St.-John xiv. 28), "The Father is greater than I," He speaks of His human nature; and when He declares (St. John x. 30), "The Father and I are one," He speaks of His divine nature. For, as the Athanasian Creed says, He is "equal to the Father according to His Godhead, and less than the Father according to His manhood."

We shall now better understand the infinite value of the merits by which Jesus Christ repaired the honour of God, which had been outraged by our transgressions. The satisfaction which is made in atonement of an offence increases in value in proportion to the dignity of the person by whom it is offered. Thus, if we had suffered some dishonour, it would be a sort of reparation if a common person were to ask us to pardon the injury which we had received; but it would be a much greater reparation if a person raised high in dignity and authority were to interpose and entreat us to forgive the offence. That is, the honour which would accrue to us in having so distinguished a suitor for pardon, would more abundantly compensate the dishonour which we had received by the offence. Now, as in Jesus Christ the Person is of infinite dignity and majesty, the merit of every one of His actions was also infinite. We see, therefore, that any action or suffering of our Lord was in itself sufficient to redeem the world; but our redemption is in a special manner ascribed to His most precious blood and death on the cross. For it was fitting that we, who by sin had incurred the sentence of eternal death, should be rescued by the second Person of the Blessed Trinity,

taking unto Himself our suffering humanity, and undergoing for us the death which we had deserved. The superabundant satisfactions of Christ, though not necessary for our redemption, are exceedingly advantageous: first, because they give greater honour and glory to God; and secondly, because they show forth in a more striking and more wonderful manner the immensity of the divine love towards us.

CHAP. XIV. Errors on the Incarnation.

It does not belong to the plan of this work to treat of the various errors which have been broached against the infallible teaching of the Church, excepting so far as the mention of the erroneous opinions which have prevailed at different times, will help to place the opposite truth more clearly before our minds. Every part of the doctrine of the Incarnation has been contradicted by some class of heretics. But, without distinctly noticing all the different shades of their heresies, it will suffice briefly to state their opinions under the threefold classification of errors affecting (1) the divine nature; (2) the human nature; and (3) the union of the two natures in Jesus Christ.

1. Cerinthus, Ebion, Paul of Samosata, Arius, Photinus, and their disciples, admitted the human nature alone in Christ. If they sometimes called Him God, they merely meant that by the merits of His good works He had acquired a participation of divine glory.

2. The Marcionites and Manichæans held that the visible creation was the work of an evil principle, and, as a consequence of this error, they taught that our Lord did not assume a real body, but merely the appearance of a body, something similar to the corporeal appearances with which angels were clothed when they visited holy persons, as recorded in Scripture. The Apollinarians also erred about the human nature of our Lord. They taught that He assumed a real body, but not a reasonable soul. The Monothelites,—so called from a Greek

word signifying one will,—admitted that our Lord took a real body and soul, but denied His human will.

3. The Nestorians taught that there were two Persons in Christ, or two Christs, one the Son of God, and the other the Son of Man, and consequently that the Blessed Virgin was not the Mother of God, but of the man Christ. The Eutychians, on the other hand, while defending the unity of our Lord's Person against the Nestorians, fell into the opposite error, by denying the two natures, and asserting that at the moment of the Incarnation the human nature was changed into the divine. A favourite comparison among them was this,—that in the same way as a drop of honey would be absorbed in the immensity of the ocean, so was the human nature absorbed in the immensity of the divine.

It would not be a difficult task to refute these errors, one by one, but it will be sufficient to point out that all of them destroy the work of the redemption. If, for instance, with the Arians and other heretics, we deny the divinity of our Lord, or if, with the Nestorians, we admit two persons in Christ, it would clearly follow that the person who suffered and died for us was merely man, and consequently the merit of his satisfaction would be finite, and as such insufficient for our redemption. If, on the other hand, we deny the reality of our Lord's human nature, or if we assert that by the Incarnation the humanity was lost or changed into the divinity, it would follow that our Redeemer was God and not also man, and consequently that He could not really suffer or die for us.

CHAP. XV.

Third Article: "Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary."

WHEN the time had come in which the mystery of the Incarnation and the redemption of man was to be accomplished, the Angel Gabriel was sent by God to a Virgin named Mary, to declare unto her that she had been chosen to be the Mother of the expected Messiah. As the fall of our first parents had been brought about by the temp-

tation of one of the rebel angels, it was fitting that one of the good angels should be the messenger appointed by God to treat with our Blessed Lady of the Incarnation, by which the effects of the fall were to be repaired. "And the angel being come in, said unto her, Hail full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women." Mary was troubled at hearing herself praised, and hesitated to give her consent to the angelic message, because she had already consecrated her body and soul to God, by a vow of perpetual virginity; and she was willing to forego the dignity of Mother of God, rather than recall the irrevocable sacrifice which she had once made. But when the angel had assured her that the mystery would be accomplished by the Holy Spirit without detriment to her virginity, she humbly bowed her head and said, "Behold, the handmaid of the Lord; be it done unto me according to thy word." At that same moment the Holy Spirit overshadowed her, and in a miraculous manner formed in her womb, and of her substance, a body like ours; for which God created a most pure and most excellent soul, and in one and the same instant, and by the same act, the Son of God, the second Person of the Blessed Trinity, was united to this body and soul, so as to form but one person with it. This union is so strict that it was not even broken by death, but will subsist for all eternity.

We learn from the Book of Genesis, that when in the beginning God created this world, "the earth was void and empty, and darkness was upon the face of the deep" (Gen. i. 2), but the Spirit of God moved over the waters, and order gradually took the place of chaos. Without cultivation, without receiving on its surface the fertilising seed, but by the creative power of God, the virgin earth "brought forth the green herb, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit after its kind" (Gen. i. 12). So in like manner, when God was about to renew the work of creation, and to destroy the chaos of sin, we are told that His Divine Spirit overshadowed our Blessed Lady, and by the Divine operation a body and soul were formed in her virginal womb, to which the second Person of the Blessed Trinity was hypostatically or personally united.

For nine months our Divine Lord, now made Man for us, remained enclosed in His Mother's womb, in order to conform to the laws of that humanity which He had assumed for our sakes. As He was miraculously conceived without detriment to the virginal integrity of His Blessed Mother, so was He miraculously born into this world. He came forth from His Mother's womb in the same mysterious manner in which He afterwards came forth from the tomb, without breaking the seal which had been placed upon it; or as He passed through the closed doors, when He appeared to His disciples after His resurrection. All this is implied by the words of the third Article of the Creed, "who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary," and is no more than the fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaias, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and His name shall be called Emanuel" (Is. vii. 14). 'Emmanuel' signifies 'God with us;' and the Hebrew phrase, 'His name shall be called Emmanuel,' is equivalent to the expression in our own language, 'He shall be Emmanuel or God with us.' Thus the name given by the prophet to the Son of the Blessed Virgin pointed out His Divine nature, while His conception and birth of a Virgin as clearly expressed His human nature.

CHAP. XVI. The Blessed Virgin is the Mother of God.

THE Holy Spirit having formed of the substance of the Blessed Virgin Mary the body which the Eternal Word united to His own Divine Person, the only Son of God has become the Son of Mary, and Mary has become the Mother of the only Son of God. She is, then, the Mother of the Creator and Sovereign Lord of the universe. The same Divine Person whom the heavenly Father calls His Son, because He was begotten of the Father before all worlds, Mary likewise calls her Son, because she conceived and brought Him forth in the world. For there are not two Sons, one born of the Father from all eternity, and the other conceived in time in the womb of the Blessed Virgin; but in Jesus Christ there is but one Person, who is

at the same time true God and true Man, begotten of the Father from eternity, born of His Mother in time. On the very day of the Annunciation, the Angel Gabriel assured our Blessed Lady that the Holy One who should be born of her should be called, *i. e.* should be, the Son of God. And when Mary went with haste into the hill country of Judea to visit her cousin St. Elizabeth, we are told that St. Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Ghost, cried out with a loud voice, and said, "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb." Then, lost in wonder, she continued, "Whence is this to me that the *Mother of my Lord* should come to me?" (St. Luke i. 41-43.) St. Matthew, describing the genealogy of Christ, concludes by the express statement that He was born of Mary (St. Matt. i. 16). And St. Paul tells us, "when the fulness of time was come, God sent His Son made of a woman" (Gal. iv. 4). And, again, we are told that our Lord was "of the seed of David, according to the flesh" (Rom. i. 3). So, again, our Blessed Lady is constantly spoken of in the Gospels as the Mother of Christ. Thus, speaking of the marriage-feast in Cana of Galilee, St. John tells us, "the Mother of Jesus was there" (St. John ii. 1). And again, when our Lord was instructing the multitude, we are told that His Mother stood without seeking Him" (St. Matt. xii. 46, 47). And, not to mention other passages of Holy Scripture, St. John, describing the crucifixion, says, "Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His Mother" (St. John xix. 25).

Mary is truly and really the Mother of God, as the Fathers repeatedly affirm, because He who was conceived and born of her is God. Thus St. Cyril of Alexandria asks, "If our Lord Jesus Christ is God, how is not the holy Virgin who bore Him the Mother of God?" The child which is conceived and born of a common mother has its body, and that alone formed of her substance, while the more noble part of its being is a spiritual soul directly created by God; nevertheless, because this body and soul have been united in her womb, so as to make but one person, we do not say that she is the mother of the body alone, but that she is the mother of the person who is composed of body and soul. Now, in the same way as

the soul of this child has been united in its mother's womb with the body, and thus has become the one person of her son, so in like manner in the womb of Mary the Word of God was united to our humanity, and became her Son. By this admirable union, as we have already explained, the second Person of the Blessed Trinity began to subsist in two distinct natures, and Mary is consequently truly called the Mother of God, and not simply the Mother of the body assumed by God.

Just in the same way as the word 'consubstantial' was the touchstone of the Arian heresy, so the title of Mother of God, which belongs to our Blessed Lady, was the touchstone of the Nestorian heresy. So long as we cling with reverence to this prerogative of Mary, we preserve intact the mystery of our redemption; but if we call this truth in question, the doctrine of the Incarnation falls together with it. Every blow which is aimed at Mary's prerogative of Mother of God, is still more injurious to the dignity of Jesus; while every thing which strengthens our faith in the privileges of Mary secures corresponding but more exalted prerogatives for Jesus. If Mary be not the Mother of God, He who was born of her is not God, and consequently could not make adequate satisfaction for our sins. We cannot abandon this prerogative of Mary without destroying our hope of salvation. On the other hand, if we really believe that Mary is the Mother of God, by the very same act we believe and profess that Jesus Christ is true God and true man. For if our Lord were God and not man, He could not be the Son of Mary; and if He were man, and not at the same time God, Mary would not be the Mother of God. So long, therefore, as we honour Mary as the Mother of God, we honour her Son as God, and maintain in its integrity the mystery of our redemption.

CHAP. XVII. Devotions connected with the Incarnation.

IF we look abroad on the state of the world, we see a number of persons who concentrate all their energy and attention on some particular pursuits. One is engrossed

in money-making, and is all attention when any thing connected with the object of his life falls on his ear, while every thing else is heedlessly passed by. Another is absorbed in politics, and is impatient when other matters intrude themselves upon him; another is wholly given up to the promotion of some scheme for the more general diffusion of education; another is occupied in some one of the many branches of scientific inquiry. Each of these persons surrounds himself with one special set of ideas; he lives in an atmosphere of his own, and attracts around himself a special class of influences. He is devoted to his favourite pursuit. Now what such a man does for the world or for self the devout Christian strives to perform for the greater honour of God and the salvation of his soul. Such a man as we have described differs from the common run of men who occupy the same sphere of life by the ardour, constancy, and enthusiasm with which he follows out his chosen aim or enterprise; so, in like manner, the devout Christian differs from ordinary Christians by the promptness and love with which he discharges his religious obligations. A person may attain moderate success in life, but it is hardly possible to reach any degree of eminence without that devotedness and perseverance of which we are speaking; so it is possible to gain heaven by barely aiming at keeping the commandments, without striving at the same time to cultivate a spirit of devotion; though many who content themselves with this low standard will fail even to reach heaven, while few, if any, will acquire any degree of perfection.

If, then, a Christian means a follower of Christ, a devout Christian must mean one who throws all his heart and soul into the imitation of the life of our Lord. He shuts out from himself, as far as he can, the distracting cares and anxieties of the world, and aims at perpetually living over again the thirty-three years of our Lord's life. He meditates often on the Gospel narrative, and lives at one time in the atmosphere of Bethlehem, and at another of Calvary; now he contemplates the glory of our Lord's risen life, or the majesty with which He reigns in heaven; now he reposes beneath the shadow of the tabernacle to

relieve his Lord's loneliness, to speak to Him of his wants, or to beg some blessing. Or again, he exercises his devotion on the Blessed Virgin, or the saints, because he sees in them copies of his Divine Lord. They speak to him in the same language St. Paul used to the first Christians: "Be you imitators of me as I am of Christ." By devotions, therefore, we mean the practices of piety and religion, based on the attributes of God, the mysteries of the life of our Lord, or the honour of the saints, which are approved and recommended by the Church as means for cultivating that spirit of which we are speaking.

There are a very great variety of devotions in use in the Church, but most of them naturally group themselves either with the great mystery of the Incarnation, or around the sacramental presence of our Lord in the Blessed Eucharist. The latter will be spoken of in treating of the Sacraments; this is the place to speak of devotions connected with the Incarnation.

The Church brings before our attention the mysteries of the life of our Lord, and endeavours to lead us to a closer imitation of His example in a twofold way. 1st. By consecrating particular parts of the year to the commemoration of some mystery of religion, or of some portion of the life of our Lord; and 2dly, by recommending to our use certain practices of piety and religion which are instituted in order to bring before our minds, and to honour in a special way, the mysteries of our faith. Hence the present subject will naturally divide itself into seasons of devotion and practices of devotion.

CHAP. XVIII. Seasons of particular Devotion.

1. THE ecclesiastical year opens with the time of Advent, which is a season of devotion intended to prepare us to celebrate in a fitting manner the birth of our Divine Redeemer. The four weeks of which it consists represent the four thousand years which preceded the coming of our Lord. It is a time of hope and desire, it is a looking forward for our redemption, in the same spirit in which the

patriarchs and prophets and the just of the old law longed and prayed for the coming of the Messiah. We are invited to honour the first mysteries of the Incarnation, and to adore our Lord still enclosed in His Mother's womb. We are constantly reminded in the office of the Church at this time of the mortified life of St. John the Baptist, and of the invitation to do penance for our sins, which was the constant theme of his preaching. Thus the Church strives to prepare us to celebrate the birth of our Lord, in the same way in which the Holy Precursor was inspired to prepare the Jews for His coming.

2. Advent is succeeded by Christmas-tide, during which we are called upon to honour in succession the mysteries of the sacred Childhood and of the hidden life of our Blessed Redeemer. The spirit of this holy time is one of sweetness and calm joy, and its lessons are those of submission and obedience, of docility and childlike simplicity and candour. It breathes a love of poverty and detachment from the riches, and honours, and pleasures of this life.

3. From Septuagesima to Easter Sunday, the Church wishes to prepare us for the solemn commemoration of our Lord's sufferings and death by prayer and watching, by penance and mortification. The shadow of the cross is thrown over this season, and its reflection deepens till it reaches the darkness of the three hours' agony. During all this time we should frequently bring before our mind the remembrance of our Lord's sorrows and sufferings. Each Friday in particular is devoted to the honour of our suffering Saviour, by the celebration of a festival which commemorates some incident or memorial of His passion. To prove our willingness to share our Lord's sufferings, as far as we are able, and to imitate his fast, the Church commands her children to fast during the forty days of Lent.

4. If we suffer with our Lord, it is meet that we should also rejoice with Him. Paschal-time takes the place of Lent, and its joy prefigures that eternal happiness which we hope to obtain when the trials and sufferings of this life are no more. During this season we accompany our Lord in His glorified life; our conversation is in Heaven,

our thoughts and aspirations are after the eternal rewards which are promised us in the world to come. Just in the same way as we are taught in Advent to look forward and to pray for the first coming of our Lord to redeem us, so now are we taught to look up and to prepare for His coming in glory, when He will reign with His saints in eternal happiness.

CHAP. XIX. Practices of Devotion connected with the Incarnation:
The Stations, or Way of the Cross.

THE beautiful devotion which is known as the Stations, or Way of the Cross, has been instituted as a means of helping us to meditate on the sufferings and death of our Lord, and to accompany Him in spirit from the hall of Pilate, where He was condemned, to Calvary and the Holy Sepulchre. This devotion may be said to have taken its rise from the Blessed Virgin and the holy women who accompanied our Lord in His last painful journey. Though the fact is nowhere recorded, we can hardly doubt that our Blessed Lady and the immediate disciples of Christ would often afterwards retrace the sorrowful footsteps which led to Calvary, and linger in loving sympathy and condolence on the spots which had been sanctified by our Lord's sufferings. Such, at least, we know has been the practice of the faithful from very early times. St. Jerome tells us this custom was observed from the very times of the Gospel. From the most distant parts of Christendom large numbers of devout pilgrims went to visit the holy places, and to meditate on the mysteries of the life of our Lord, amid the scenes which had been hallowed by His earthly presence. And among the holy places, none seem to have possessed stronger claims on the affections of the faithful, than those which had witnessed the sufferings and death of our Redeemer.

To encourage the devotion of her children in their pilgrimages to the holy places, and particularly to induce them to preserve a grateful remembrance of the sufferings of our Lord's Passion, the Church granted a large number of indulgences to all who, with true sorrow and repent-

ance for their sins, followed step by step in the journey which had been traversed by Him to Calvary, and meditated at each stage of His Passion on the sufferings which He endured at that particular spot. But as there were many who wished to share the fruit of this devotion, who yet were unable to undertake the journey to the Holy Land, and as in course of time access to the holy places became difficult and almost impossible, the Church established the Devotion of the Way of the Cross, to supply her children with a ready means of cultivating in their interior the same spirit which would be nourished and increased by actually visiting the holy places. To recall to our minds as vividly as possible the scenes of our Lord's sufferings, crosses are stationed at various intervals to represent the place at which some particular incident of the Passion occurred; and to assist our meditation, pictures are generally placed at each of these stations depicting the circumstances which had attended that stage of the Passion. When these crosses have been blessed and erected by one who has received requisite faculties or power for this purpose, the Church grants the same indulgences to all who practise this devotion, that are granted to persons who visit the holy places, and meditate on our Lord's sufferings where they actually occurred.

This devotion is recommended as one of the means for sanctifying the time of Lent, but it may be practised at all times, both in public and private. All that is required to enable us to gain the indulgences, where the stations have been duly erected is, (1) to have the intention of doing so, as is the case with all indulgences; and (2), in the spirit of true sorrow and repentance for our sins, to accompany our Lord in His last painful journey, pausing awhile at each station to picture to our minds the scene which is there represented, and to form in our hearts corresponding affections and resolutions. The particular forms of meditation and prayer which are used when this devotion is performed in public are not essential; we may, if we choose, make our own meditations, keeping, of course, to the subject represented in each of the different stations.

Somewhat akin to the Devotion of the Way of the

Cross is that of the three hours' Agony. This devotion is peculiar to Good Friday, and consists in honouring the three last hours of the life of our Lord, by meditating on His sufferings on the cross, and particularly on His seven last words. When this devotion is performed in public, it begins on Good Friday at mid-day, the hour our Blessed Redeemer was nailed to the cross, and consists of a short meditation on each of the seven last words. The pause which is made between each of these meditations, is usually filled up by plaintive strains of music suited to the subject of the meditation. The whole is so arranged as to fill up the three hours during which our Divine Lord hung on the cross before He expired.

CHAP. XX. Devotions in honour of the Sacred Heart, the most Precious Blood, and the Five Wounds.

IN the explanation of the doctrine of the Incarnation, we have seen that the second Person of the Most Adorable Trinity, in becoming man, united together the divinity and humanity in His one Divine Person. By the accomplishment of this great mystery, the sacred humanity of our Lord, and each of its constituent parts, was inseparably joined to the Person of the Divine Word. In consequence of this union, the human nature of Christ, and the various members of which it is composed, are deserving of supreme homage and adoration. We adore the Sacred Body, the Precious Blood, the Five Wounds, or the loving Heart of our Lord, because they have no separate existence apart from His Divine Person. When we honour any part of the sacred humanity, our adoration ultimately terminates in the Divine Person of the Word inseparably united to that humanity. We learn from the Holy Scriptures that this supreme homage was constantly given to our Lord in His human nature. Thus, when the Eternal Father brought His only-begotten Son into the world, He commanded all the angels of God to adore Him (Heb. i. 6). Nay, we are assured by St. Paul, that His humility, in becoming man and dying for us, is an additional reason why all creatures are obliged to adore Him: "Who being in the form"

(nature) "of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant" (*i. e.* the nature of man), "being made in the likeness of men, and in habit found as a man. He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death: even to the death of the cross. *For which cause* God also hath exalted Him, and hath given Him a name which is above all names: that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth" (Philip. ii. 6-10). Thus, again, we are told of the wise men who were led to Bethlehem by a miraculous star, that when they found the Child, "falling down, they adored Him" (St. Matt. ii. 11). Again, Jesus asked the blind man whose sight He had restored, "Dost thou believe in the Son of God? . . . he said, I believe, Lord. And falling down he adored Him" (St. John ix. 38). And again, after the resurrection, we read that the Apostles paid the same divine homage to our Lord when He appeared to them: "seeing Him," says St. Matthew, "they adored" (St. Matt. xxviii. 17).

When, therefore, we adore the sacred humanity, or any part of it, the foundation of our homage is the hypostatic union. That is, we adore the second Person of the Blessed Trinity inseparably united to His human nature, His Precious Blood, His Sacred Heart, or His wounded Hands and Feet. But though our homage, whether expressed in the celebration of a festival, or in some devotional practice in honour of the several parts of the humanity of Christ, rests on one and the same foundation, yet there are special reasons why we choose one part in preference to another, and why those parts, which we thus specially honour, give rise to distinct festivals and devotions. Thus we have a distinct festival and devotion in honour of the Precious Blood, because it is the price at which we have been redeemed. Our salvation is due to the merits of the Precious Blood. By it the sentence of condemnation which was pronounced against us has been reversed, and the covenant sealed by which we are reconciled to God. In like manner, we honour with a distinct festival and devotion the Five Wounds, because they are the channels through which the Blood flowed for our redemption; they plead to God

for our forgiveness by always representing to Him the price which has been paid for our ransom, and they speak persuasively to our hearts, inviting us to love Him who had done so much for the love of us.

Thus again, in the same way, we honour the Sacred Heart, because (1) it is represented to us by our Lord Himself as the seat of those virtues and good dispositions which we are to copy from His example: "Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart" (St. Matt. xi. 29). And (2) because, in our ordinary language, as well as in the language of Holy Scripture, the heart is considered as the symbol of love; and hence the Sacred Heart of our Lord is the symbol of the immense charity with which He has loved us. Thus in one of the lessons read on the Festival of the Sacred Heart, we are told that Clement XIII. allowed this festival to be celebrated, at the prayer of certain churches, in order that the faithful might, under the symbol of the Sacred Heart, more devoutly and fervently bear in mind and profit by the love of Christ, who suffered and died for the redemption of mankind, and instituted the Sacrament of His Body and Blood in remembrance of His death. Finally, as the Sacred Heart is the symbol of the love of our Lord in dying for our redemption, so is it a most touching memorial for us of His death, and a most moving invitation to win our love.

CHAP. XXI.

Fourth Article: "Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried."

THE second and third Articles treat of the Divinity and the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. We are taught to believe that our Lord, the only Son of God, the second Person of the Blessed Trinity, is truly God born of the Father from all eternity, and also truly man conceived and born of His Mother in time. The next thing to be explained is why He became man, or, in other words, to show what the Apostles have taught us about the mystery of our redemption. By taking to Himself a body and soul like ours, Jesus Christ has become our Redeemer, our Advocate, and our

Judge. It is this threefold relationship of our Lord to us that has to be spoken of in expounding the fourth and three following articles of the Creed.

We are redeemed by the sufferings and death of Christ, and the fourth Article speaks of the time and the manner of the sufferings and death which He endured for our sakes. It was important that the facts on which our redemption depends should be so circumstantially related as to place their truth beyond the reach of doubt. Hence the detailed accounts which we read in the four Evangelists; hence, too, the mention in the Creed of Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea, who condemned our Lord to death.

The first word in this Article refers to the sorrows, pains, and ignominies which our Lord underwent before being condemned to the cross,—His agony in the garden, His betrayal by Judas, His seizure and ill-treatment by the multitude, His accusation before Annas, Caiaphas, Pilate, and Herod, His scourging at the pillar, and crowning with thorns. After unheard-of sufferings and ignominies, the Evangelists teach us that our Lord was condemned to die on the cross. For it was fitting that the salvation of mankind should be purchased on the wood of the cross, that whence death came life might also come, and that he the Prince of darkness, who overcame by the tree, might also by the tree be overcome. For three hours Jesus Christ hung on the cross, and then bowing His head He died, that is, His soul was separated from His body. Finally, as a farther confirmation of the death of our Lord, the Apostles teach us that His body was embalmed and laid in the sepulchre.

Our Lord having become man to save us from the penalty of sin, might have satisfied for us by any of the actions or sufferings of His blessed life; but to procure greater glory to God, to display a more wonderful love of man, and to set us an example of patient suffering, He chose to shed the last drop of His most precious blood. He sacrificed Himself willingly to obtain our ransom: "He was offered," says the prophet, "because He willed it" (Isa. lii. 7). He testifies of Himself: "I lay down My life, that I may take it again. No man taketh it away from

Me: but I lay it down of Myself, and I have power to lay it down: and I have power to take it up again" (St. John x. 17, 18).

He died for all men, and by His death ransomed us from the penalty of sin, and opened for us the gates of heaven. "He is the propitiation," says St. John, "for our sins: and not for ours only, but for those of the whole world" (1 John ii. 2). He purchased the means of salvation for all. Those who lived before His coming might be saved by His future merits; those who have since gained heaven have done so through these same merits. But though Christ died for all men, all will not be saved. This satisfaction is a healing balsam whose virtue is infallible, but it must be duly applied to our souls in order to produce its effects. His merits are a never-failing source, from which all may draw the waters of salvation; but those who neglect to profit by the graces which are freely offered unto all, will be lost, in spite of the price which has been paid for their redemption. All have free will, and may shut their eyes against the light which has come into the world, and may refuse to coöperate with the good inspirations which they receive. But Christ having died for all, there is no one to whom sufficient grace to be saved is not given, and consequently no one is lost except by his own fault.

Following the order of the Catechism, it will be in place here to add a few words on the use of the sign of the Cross. We have already seen that we are bound in a special manner to make acts of faith in the Unity and Trinity of God, and in the Incarnation and death of our Lord. Now we are reminded of these mysteries, and assisted in making these acts of faith, by the use of the sign of the Cross. For when we say "in the name" in the singular number, we indicate the Unity of God; and when we distinctly mention the three several Persons, we profess our faith in the Trinity. At the same time, the form of the Cross, which we make, while we pronounce the words "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," reminds us that Christ became man, and died on the Cross for us.

There are also three other reasons why we make the sign of the Cross. (1) To show that we are Christians, or the followers of a crucified Master. The Cross is called the ensign of the Son of Man, and if we are His soldiers, we must fight under His standard. (2) We make the sign of the Cross to invoke the Divine aid, and to consecrate our actions, especially those of a spiritual character, by offering them to the Blessed Trinity. Hence, Tertullian says of the ancient Christians, "Whenever we move, when we enter and go out, in dressing, in washing, at table, when we retire to rest, during conversation, we impress on our forehead the sign of the Cross." (3) We also make the sign of the Cross to arm ourselves against temptation; for the Cross is the sign of our Lord's victory over the devil and the powers of darkness, and is terrible to the evil spirits.

CHAP. XXII.

Fifth Article: "He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead."

THE fifth Article treats of the descent into hell, and the resurrection of Christ. To understand the precise meaning of the first part of this Article, "He descended into hell," we must explain the different significations attached to the word "hell." 1. It is sometimes used for the grave; but, as we have been already told, in the previous article of our Lord's death and burial, this cannot be the meaning of the word in the present instance. 2. It most commonly means the eternal prison where the fallen angels and lost souls are for ever tormented. 3. It is sometimes used of *Purgatory*; and, 4, it is used to signify the place of rest and natural happiness, where the souls of the just who died before the coming of Christ were kept in expectation of their redemption and triumphant entry with our Lord into heaven on the day of His ascension. This place or state of existence is generally called Limbo, and is believed by many to be the abode of the infants who, since the coming of our Lord, have died without baptism.

The question then is, Into which of these abodes did the soul of our Lord go after His death? 1. It is certain that He went to Limbo, which by His presence became a paradise. It was of this abode that the words addressed to the good thief were spoken: "This day shalt thou be with Me in paradise" (St. Luke xxiii. 43). 2. It is also considered certain that He descended into Purgatory, to console and enlighten the holy souls, and to tell them of their expected redemption. This would seem to be implied by the words of Ecclesiasticus (xxiv. 45): "I will penetrate to all the lower parts of the earth, and will behold all that sleep, and will enlighten all that hope in the Lord." Some writers, basing their opinion on arguments of fitness, piously believe that our Lord on this occasion liberated all these holy souls; but as we have no evidence on this point in Scripture or tradition, we are obliged to leave it in uncertainty. 3. Bellarmin and other learned writers are of opinion, that besides going down to Purgatory to free the holy souls, our Lord also descended to the hell of the damned, not of course to suffer or to be tormented, but to proclaim His victory over the devil, to confound the obstinacy of the reprobate, and to show them how easily they might have been saved.

"The third day He rose again from the dead." Our Lord might have restored His body to life again immediately after He expired on the cross; but He chose to remain in the tomb till the third day, to prove the reality of His death, and also to fulfil the types and prophecies concerning His resurrection. This great mystery was the crowning event in the life of our Lord. It placed as it were anew the seal of the Divine authority to His teaching, His virtues, and miracles. It took away the humiliation of the cross; for if the ignominies which He endured in His passion and death were great, still greater was the glory and honour with which He was crowned in His resurrection. "He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even to the death of the cross; for which cause God also hath exalted Him, and hath given Him a name above all names; that in the name of Jesus

every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father" (Philip. ii. 8-11). And as the resurrection gave special glory to God, so likewise is it the sure and solid foundation of our hope, that we too shall one day rise again to a life of blessed immortality: "For if the dead rise not again, neither is Christ risen again; and if Christ is not risen, our faith is vain" (1 Cor. xv. 16, 17). The resurrection of our Lord is the model and exemplar and the pledge of our future resurrection. For as Christ our Head has risen again, it is fitting that we, who are His members, should be associated with Him in the glory of His new life.

So vital are the consequences which depend on the mystery of the resurrection, so important a relation does it occupy in the whole Christian dispensation, that the providence of God ordained that its truth should be brought before men's minds in a most prominent way, to render them inexcusable if they refused to believe. Such an event in its own nature was so new and unlooked for as to challenge the attention of all. But our Lord was not content to leave things to take their natural course, but over and over again during the time of His life, He drew the attention of His hearers in the most marked manner to the prophecy of His resurrection. When His enemies, the Scribes and Pharisees, asked Him for a sign or proof of His mission, He might have referred them to the miracles which He constantly wrought; but, as if these were nothing compared with the crowning miracle of His resurrection, He answered: "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh a sign, and a sign shall not be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet. For as Jonas was in the whale's belly three days and three nights, so shall the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights" (St. Matt. xii. 39, 40). Again: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will build it up" (St. John ii. 19). And again: "Jesus began to show His disciples that He must suffer many things, and be put to death, and the third day rise again" (St. Matt. xvi. 21).

And again: "Behold, we go to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man shall be betrayed to the chief-priests and the Scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles, to be mocked and scourged and crucified; and the third day He shall rise again" (St. Matt. xx. 18, 19). In these prophecies the words "three days," "three days and three nights," and "the third day," are used as equivalent expressions, and simply imply part of three days. We have a parallel passage, Esther iv. 16, where the phrase "three days and three nights" is used to signify two nights and one full day. And we sometimes use an analogous expression in English.

So well known were the prophecies of the resurrection, that the chief-priests and the Pharisees, after they had seen our Lord expire on the cross, came together to Pilate, saying, "Sir, we remember that that Seducer said, while He was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore the sepulchre to be guarded until the third day: lest perhaps His disciples come, and steal Him away, and say to the people, He is risen from the dead: and the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said to them: You have a guard: go, guard it as you know; and they departing, made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone and setting guards" (St. Matt. xxvii. 62-66). All these precautions, instead of having the effect which the enemies of our Lord desired, only served to place the truth of His resurrection beyond the possibility of a doubt. For the guards who had been stationed at the tomb to prevent the disciples taking away the body of Christ, became witnesses of the fact of the resurrection, and began to proclaim it in Jerusalem, till the chief-priests stopped their mouths with bribes, and persuaded them to say, "His disciples came by night, and took away the body while we were asleep" (St. Matt. xxviii.).

The truth of the resurrection rests on the clearest and most incontestable evidence. Besides the testimony of the guards, we have that of the disciples of Christ, so many of whom laid down their lives in attestation of the truths which they had witnessed. To these our Lord appeared frequently during the forty days that He abode

upon earth after His resurrection. Sometimes He manifested Himself to one or two, sometimes to all the Apostles together; and on one occasion, we are told by St. Paul, He was seen by more than five hundred brethren at once (1 Cor. xv. 6). So far, indeed, were the Apostles from being over-credulous, that St. Thomas, one of their number, on being told by the rest that they had seen our Lord, refused to believe, and said, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe." In condescension to the weakness of this Apostle, and to confirm our faith, our Lord next appeared when Thomas was with them, and said to him, "Put in thy finger hither, and see My hands; and bring hither thy hand, and put it into My side; and be not faithless, but believing." Thomas answered, and said, My Lord and my God" (St. John xx. 25-28). After such evidence as is given us in the simple and natural accounts left us by the writers of the New Testament, nothing more could possibly be required to place the reality of the resurrection on the most solid foundation.

CHAP. XXIII.

Sixth Article: "He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty."

WHEN our Lord had remained forty days on earth after His resurrection, speaking with His disciples of the kingdom of heaven (Acts i. 3), instructing His Apostles in many divine secrets concerning His Church, and the matter and form of the Sacraments, the time had come at which He was to leave the world, and ascend to His Father. We need not dwell on the various circumstances which attended His departure from the world, as they belong to sacred history rather than to doctrine. It is enough to point out that our Lord ascended into heaven, (1) To take possession, in His human nature, of the glory which He had merited by His life and death; for "the Lamb that was slain is worthy to receive power, and divinity, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory" (Apoc. v.

12). (2) He ascended into heaven to prepare a place for us. In His Father's house are many mansions, and He is gone to prepare a home for us; but He will come again and take us to Himself, that where He is we also may be (St. John xiv. 2, 3). A throne is ready waiting for us, and will undoubtedly be given to us unless by our own fault we forfeit it. (3) He has gone to plead our cause with His Father. "We have an Advocate with the Father," says St. John, "Jesus Christ the just; and He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world" (1 John ii. 1, 2). He has carried the marks of His sacred Wounds with Him to heaven, to speak in our behalf, and to represent unto His Father the immense price at which we have been redeemed. He ascended as a conqueror, taking with Him all the holy souls who had died in His grace, as the first-fruit of His victory: "ascending on high, He led captivity captive, He gave gifts to men" (Ps. lxxvii. 19).

"Sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty." As God, Jesus Christ is equal in every thing to His Father, and as man He is exalted far above all pure creatures. To represent to us the honour and glory with which He is crowned in His human nature, the Apostles, by telling us that He sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, give us to understand that He occupies the highest place in heaven. He is said to be seated at the right hand of God to express His exalted dignity and the unalterable repose of His beatitude. The expression here used is of course only figurative; for, as God is a pure spirit, He has no body nor hands, nor does our Lord sit any more than stand, for St. Stephen tells us, 'he beheld the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God' (Acts vii. 55). In expressing heavenly truths, the Apostles were obliged to use human language, and in this instance the idea is taken from the analogy of what happens among men of different rank who meet together. As the right hand is the place of honour, it is assigned unto our Lord, and He is said to sit or to stand as contrasted with the highest among the angels, whom the sacred Scriptures represent as prostrate before the throne of God,

with their faces veiled, as if unworthy to appear in His presence.

CHAP. XXIV.

Seventh Article : "From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead."

As our Lord ascended into heaven, the disciples continued gazing steadfastly after Him; and when He had disappeared from their sight, two angels were sent to announce unto them that this same Jesus who had been taken from them into heaven should so come as they had seen Him go into heaven. Our Lord then will come again on the last day, to demand of all mankind a strict account of the way in which they have served Him. All our words and actions, and even our inmost and most hidden thoughts, will be made known to the whole world, and we shall be rewarded or punished as we deserve. But as every one is judged immediately after death, a general judgment at the end of the world would seem superfluous; it will therefore be well, in the explanation of this Article, to point out some of the reasons which the holy Fathers use to prove the advantages of a solemn promulgation before the assembled universe of the sentence passed on each one at his death.

1. The influence which men have exercised by their example, their teaching, by the books they have written, by the children or followers they have left behind them, continues after their death; and the good and evil of which they have been the cause can be more clearly manifested at the end of the world.

2. The character of the virtuous is often unjustly taken away, while the wicked in this world frequently obtain the praise of virtue; it is therefore fitting that this apparent injustice should be remedied at the end of the world.

3. The good and bad alike have their bodies as partners in their virtues or guilt, and consequently it is fitting that in the general resurrection they should share the glory or ignominy of a general judgment.

4. The good have frequently to suffer in this world while the wicked prosper, or they are involved in the

temporal calamities which the wickedness of others has brought on a whole city or nation; and it is therefore fitting that the providence of God in His dealings, both with the good and the bad, should be vindicated before the whole world on the last day.

We are left in darkness and uncertainty about the time of the end of the world; but there are three principal signs, or forerunners, of the last day: (1) The preaching of the Gospel throughout the world, for our Lord says (St. Matt. xxiv. 14), "This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then shall the consummation come;" (2) a great falling-off from the faith; and (3) the coming of Antichrist: "unless there come a revolt first, and the man of sin be revealed," the judgment will not take place (2 Thess. ii.).

It is worthy of remark, that, in the account which is given of the last judgment in the New Testament, no mention is made of a middle state; but we are simply told of the eternal happiness of the good, and the eternal reprobation of the wicked. The reason of this is, that all who go to Purgatory will finally go to heaven, and after the last day Purgatory will no longer exist.

This Article is the last of those which specially refer to the second Person of the ever-adorable Trinity. Before proceeding to speak of the Holy Spirit, it will be well to mention that the actions ascribed to our Lord in the foregoing Articles were performed by Him in His human nature. It was in His human nature that He was conceived and born of a virgin, that He suffered and died for us, that He rose again from the dead and ascended into heaven, which, in His divine nature, He had never left. But though all these things happened in His human nature, it is quite true to say that it was God who was born, who suffered, who died, who was buried, who rose again and ascended into heaven; because, whatever belongs to the nature belongs to the person who rules and sustains that nature. Just in the same way as every thing which we do or suffer, whether in the body or the mind, is attributed to our person, so the actions or sufferings of our Lord, whether in His human or divine nature, belong to His one Divine

Person. Hence we say with the strictest truth that it was God who suffered all that our Lord endured in His human nature, it was God who performed all the actions ascribed to Him in His human nature.

CHAP. XXV.

Eighth Article : "I believe in the Holy Ghost."

1. IN the eighth Article of the Creed we declare our belief in the third Person of the Most Holy Trinity. We profess that the Holy Ghost is a distinct Person, like the Father and the Son, having the same Divine nature that They have, and being coequal with Them in all perfections. Hence the sacred Scriptures call the Holy Spirit God, equally with the Father and the Son. Thus St. Peter said : "Ananias, why hath Satan tempted thy heart, that thou shouldst lie to the Holy Ghost? Thou hast not lied to men, but to *God*" (Acts v. 3, 4). Hence divine attributes are given to the Holy Spirit: thus, "the Spirit of the Lord hath filled the whole world" (Wisdom i. 7), where His immensity is shown; and again, "the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God" (1 Cor. ii. 10), where His omniscience is proclaimed.

2. We further profess that the third Person of the Most Holy Trinity proceeds from the Father and the Son,—not from the Father alone, nor from the Father through the Son, but from both. In speaking of the second Person, we have said that He proceeds from the Father by an eternal generation, and hence the first Person is called the Father, and the second, the Son. But with regard to the Holy Ghost, we simply know that He proceeds from the Father and the Son, not by generation, but in some other way with which we are unacquainted. In consequence, we have no distinct word to define how the Holy Spirit emanates from the Father and the Son; but we use the general word "procession," leaving undetermined the manner in which it takes place. So likewise we have no distinctive name for the third Person, because the Father is a Holy Spirit, and so

is the Son; but as the Father and the Son have each a proper name, arising out of the generation of the second Person by the first, so the common name "Holy Spirit" is used to describe the third Person.

3. Before Jesus Christ left this world and ascended into heaven, He promised to send down His Holy Spirit on His Apostles. This promise was fulfilled ten days after the ascension. It was consequently on the fiftieth day after the resurrection, and it is therefore called the day of Pentecost,—a Greek word signifying 'fiftieth.' For while the disciples "were altogether in one place there suddenly came a sound from heaven of a mighty wind coming, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them parted tongues as it were of fire, and it sat upon every one of them, and they were filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts ii. 1, 2). The Holy Spirit assumed this visible form to denote the invisible effects which He produced in their souls. As fire purifies, gives light and heat, so the Holy Ghost cleansed the souls of the Apostles from their sins and imperfections, illumined them with His divine light, and kindled within them the fire of charity. He descended upon them under the appearance of tongues, to signify that He enabled them to speak different languages, and to preach the Gospel with an eloquence which no one could resist.

The Holy Spirit came down upon the Apostles to prepare them for the great work for which they had been chosen, of preaching the Gospel and planting the Church. The same God who had revealed Himself to the Jews in the old law, was now about to manifest Himself in a more perfect manner to the whole world by the preaching of the Apostles. There is the closest analogy between the establishment of the Mosaic dispensation and the promulgation of the Gospel, which contained the fulfilment and reality of what had been simply promised and prefigured to the chosen people of old. As the sacrifice of the paschal lamb was a type of the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, and the deliverance of the Jews from the Egyptian bondage, a figure of our

redemption from the slavery of sin and the devil; so, to complete the parallel, the Holy Spirit descended on the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, and inspired¹ them to publish the new law on the very same day on which the old law had been given to the Jews. And as of old the day of Pentecost was observed as a solemn festival to commemorate the promulgation of the Mosaic law, so, with much more reason, does the Christian Church celebrate this same festival to commemorate the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles in the form of fiery tongues, and the first preaching of the Gospel.

Filled with the Divine Spirit, the Apostles were changed into new men. They who before had been full of fear and trembling now boldly went forth in the midst of their enemies, and openly proclaimed that Jesus, who had been crucified, was the Son of God. Instead of shrinking from persecution and suffering, they were overjoyed because they were deemed worthy to endure something for the name of Jesus; and their words were fruitful in the conversion of multitudes of souls. By his first sermon, on the very day of Pentecost, St. Peter converted three thousand, and by another sermon we are told he converted as many as five thousand. Those who thus received the teaching of the Apostles were formed into one body, who were united together by believing the same revealed doctrines of Christ, by partaking in the same means of salvation, and by submission to "the Bishops whom the Holy Ghost had appointed to rule the Church of God" (Acts xx. 28). Thus was established the Catholic Church, which will be treated of in the next Article.

CHAP. XXVI.

Ninth Article: "The Holy Catholic Church; the Communion of Saints."

WE have seen in the explanation of the foregoing Articles that Jesus Christ took a body and soul like ours in order to redeem and save us. He came upon earth to obtain our forgiveness by His death, and to teach us the way to

heaven. But His work was not to end with His life. He came to be a propitiation, not for one generation alone, but for the whole world. Still He was not always to remain with us in the same visible form in which He was present with His first disciples in Judea; and therefore, to provide for the continuance of His mission, and to supply His place after His ascension into heaven, He chose from the number of His disciples His twelve Apostles, whom He instructed and prepared in a special manner for the great work for which He designed them. He made them His familiar companions during the three years of His public life; He imparted to them His heavenly secrets; He gave them power to change bread and wine into His own Body and Blood, as He Himself had done at His last supper. He intrusted them with the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and with the awful power of forgiving and retaining sins. He put and left them in His own place, and made them in a manner His own equals,—“He that heareth you,” He says, “heareth Me, and he that despiseth you despiseth Me” (St. Luke x. 16).

Having thus prepared the Apostles, Jesus Christ gave them the same commission which He had Himself received from His Father: “As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you. When He had said this He breathed upon them, and He said to them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained” (St. John xx. 21-23). And again coming, He spoke to them, saying: “All power is given to Me, in heaven and in earth. Going therefore, teach ye all nations; baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world” (St. Matt. xxviii. 18). And, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned.” And “they going forth preached every where; the Lord working withal, and confirming the word with signs that followed” (St. Mark xvi. 16-20).

From a careful examination of the commission given to the Apostles by their Divine Master, we may form an idea of what the Church was to be. It was to consist of persons who had received special powers from our Lord, and a special authority to teach and to make disciples of all mankind. And this work was to succeed in part, for we are told of some who, by believing and being baptised, would be saved. But still, because man has free-will to reject the heavenly message sent unto him, there would be some who would not hear and obey the teaching of the Apostles; and so we are told that those who refused to believe would be condemned. Besides the teachers in the Church, there would be likewise those who were taught; and these were required to receive the whole revealed truth of God, to submit to the authority of those whom the Holy Spirit had appointed to rule the Church of God (Acts xx. 28), and to be admitted into the body of the faithful, and to a right to partake of the other sacraments by means of holy baptism. "Going, teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things I have commanded you." Finally, in the same way as the work of the salvation of souls did not end with the ascension of our Lord into heaven, but was to be continued by the Apostles, acting as the ministers of Christ, so the mission of the Apostles was not to end with their lives, but was to be carried on by their successors throughout all time. Hence our Lord did not simply promise to be with them throughout their lifetime, but to the end of the world; that is, long after they had been taken to their reward, He would still be with their successors, guarding them against error, and giving fruit to their word and ministry by His wonder-working grace. So, too, the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, whom Jesus Christ promised to send down to comfort His disciples after His own departure, and to teach them all truth (St. John xvi. 13), was not given for any limited period, but was "to abide with them for ever." "I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you for ever: the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive because it seeth Him.

not, nor knoweth Him; but you shall know Him, because He shall abide with you, and be in you" (St. John xiv. 16, 17).

Summing up these various particulars, we see that the Church of Christ would consist of persons who, being baptised, were united in one body by the belief of one and the same faith, by the use of the same sacraments, and by submission to their lawfully appointed pastors or rulers. They were thus to form one body, because, as there is one Lord, one baptism, one hope to which we all look forward for eternity, so there is but one faith, one true religion, and one Church of Christ. Moreover, as the Church is composed of preachers and teachers, and of hearers who are commanded to listen and obey; as the pastors of the Church had to administer certain outward rites, such as baptism, it clearly follows, from her very nature and constitution, that the Church must be a visible body. Indeed so conspicuous is this property of the Church, that the sacred Scripture describes her as a mountain placed on the top of mountains, and exalted above the hills (Isa. ii. 2). Finally, the Church will be perpetual. Jesus Christ has promised to be with her to the end of the world; His Holy Spirit will abide in her for ever.

CHAP. XXVII. The Pope, or Head of the Church.

It has been explained, that the members of the Church form two classes, viz. those who, like the Apostles, were appointed to teach and rule, and the general body of the faithful, who were to be taught and governed. Our Lord is Himself the Founder of this society, and was its visible Head during the time that He abode upon earth, and is still its invisible Ruler and Head now that He has ascended into heaven. But in order to preserve unity of faith and government in His Church after His departure, He chose from His Apostles one whom He made supreme over all the rest. The sacred Scripture records, first, the promise, and secondly, the actual appointment of St. Peter to be the Vicar of Christ, the visible head of the Church, and the spiritual father and teacher of all the faithful.

We read in St. Matthew (xvi. 18, 19) that our Lord in a solemn manner changed the name Simon, by which St. Peter had hitherto been known, into Peter, which signifies a rock. This was done in accordance with the ancient practice of conferring a name expressive of the office which the person who bore it fulfilled, or of changing the name to signify a new dignity or eminence to which he was raised. Our Blessed Lord, therefore, having indicated by this change of name that He was about to bestow some special favour on St. Peter, proceeds to make him the following promise : "Thou art Peter (*i. e.* a rock), and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven" (St. Matt. xvi. 18, 19). We have here two figures, both of which declare the authority which was promised St. Peter as head of the Church.

1st. He is made the rock or foundation of the Church. As it is the foundation which supports and keeps together the whole building, so St. Peter, by being made the foundation of the Church, received power to support and maintain it.

2dly. To him are promised the keys of the kingdom of heaven, over and above the power of binding and loosing, which was likewise imparted to the other Apostles. To understand this expression, we must bear in mind that the possession of the keys of any place is a symbol of authority to rule and govern. Thus the governors of cities or fortresses hold the keys, and when their authority is to be transferred to another, this is done by delivering up the keys. When, therefore, our Lord promised to St. Peter the power of the keys, it was equivalent to the promise of making him the supreme ruler and head of His Church upon earth.

Such was the promise made to St. Peter; its accomplishment is recorded by St. John (xxi. 15-17). In answer to the threefold profession of love which was demanded of St. Peter, in reparation of his threefold denial, Jesus Christ commissioned this Apostle to feed His lambs and to feed

His sheep. Here again is a figurative expression, which would be easily understood in the time of our Lord, when kings and rulers were frequently called the shepherds of the people, and when the word which has been translated by "feed" commonly meant to rule or exercise authority in the same way that a shepherd does over his flock. The same figurative expression is preserved when we call the rulers of the Church pastors or shepherds. Our Lord, then, empowered St. Peter to feed both His lambs and His sheep; that is to say, He gave him the charge of His whole flock, both laity and clergy. He made him the supreme ruler of the Church, in order that there might always be one fold and the one shepherd.

St. Peter was appointed to his sublime office in order to show forth and to preserve the unity of the Church. Now if this were necessary when the teaching of our Lord was fresh in the recollection of His disciples, and when the faithful were so cemented together in charity that they are said by St. Luke "to have had but one heart and one soul," how much more would one supreme ruler be necessary in succeeding times! The office of St. Peter, therefore, did not expire with him; but as the Church was to subsist in unity throughout all ages, the supremacy of St. Peter was transmitted to his successors, the Popes or Bishops of Rome. By a providential dispensation, the See of Peter is the only one of the apostolic sees which has preserved the faith and the uninterrupted succession of Bishops to our own day.

CHAP. XXVIII. The Marks of the Church.

As the Church was established to perpetuate the work which our Lord Himself began for the good of souls, as she is the divinely-appointed channel through which we receive the true faith and the means of salvation, it is of the utmost importance to have some easy way of distinguishing her from all false pretenders. We are surrounded by a variety of religious bodies, all of which claim to be the true Church of Christ; but yet our reason tells us one Church alone can make good her claim. Now, we cannot

suppose that God has left mankind in hopeless ignorance on the vital question which is the true Church. There must be some marks or notes by which we may distinguish her from the false sects which pretend to be the religion of Christ. What, then, are these marks of the true Church, that, by applying them to the religious bodies by whom we are surrounded, we may be able to ascertain where she may be found?

In the Nicene Creed, the characteristics of the true Church are clearly expressed: "I believe one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church." The true Church, therefore, must be One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic.

I. The Church is one in her doctrine (1) because, as her doctrine comes from Christ, it cannot contain contradictory articles. As there is one Lord, so must there be one faith. Hence St. Paul says, "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach a gospel to you, besides (that is, different from) that which you have received, let him be anathema" (Gal. i. 8). (2) She is one in communion; that is, all her children have a right to participate in the same spiritual blessings, the same sacraments and sacrifice. "One Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Ep. iv. 4). "We, being many, are one bread, one body, all that partake of one bread" (1 Cor. x. 17). (3) She is one in government, for the Church is described by our Lord Himself as one fold, which is guided and directed by one shepherd (St. John x. 16).

II. Holy. The Church must be holy (1) in her doctrine because it is the revealed truth of God, who is infinitely holy. (2) She must be holy by furnishing the means of sanctification to her children, for the very object of the institution of the Church is to promote the glory of God by the sanctification and salvation of souls. (3) She must be holy by producing saints, for as the means were chosen by Christ Himself, they cannot fail to produce their effect.

III. Catholic. The Church is Catholic (1) in point of time; that is, she subsists in all ages. "I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you for ever" (St. John xiv. 16). "Be-

hold I am with you all days, even to the end of the world" (St. Matt. xxviii.). (2) She is Catholic in place, as being designed to exist in all nations. "Go teach all nations," &c. (St. Matt. xxviii.). "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world" (St. Matt. xxiv. 14). (3) She must be Catholic by teaching all revealed truth. In the commission which our Blessed Lord gave the Apostles to preach to all nations, He expressly enjoined them to teach them to observe all things whatsoever He had commanded; and He promised to send the Holy Spirit upon them for the very purpose of preserving them from error, and enabling them to teach the whole truth. "The Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind whatsoever I have said to you" (St. John xiv. 26).

IV. Apostolic. (1) The Church is apostolic in the uninterrupted succession of her pastors from the Apostles, who were appointed by our Lord Himself. We have already seen that Jesus Christ chose His Apostles and conferred upon them special powers for the work of the ministry, and promised to be with them all days to the end of the world. Hence those alone who can trace their descent from the Apostles are heirs of the promises made to the Apostles. As occasions arose, the Apostles appointed others, to assist them in their work, and to supply their place after their death. Thus they chose St. Matthias in place of Judas (Acts i.). Thus, again, they appointed the seven deacons, and ordained them for their work by prayer and the imposition of hands (Acts vi. 6). Thus, too, St. Paul tells us he established Bishops in the different cities which were converted to Christianity. He made St. Timothy Bishop of Ephesus, and St. Titus Bishop of Crete; and in his epistles to them he gives them rules for appointing successors, as he had appointed them. (2) The Church is apostolic in doctrine, because as the whole revealed truth was delivered to the Apostles as a sacred deposit, as Jesus Christ commissioned them to teach all whatsoever He had commanded, and as the Holy Spirit was given to them to teach them all truth (St. John xvi. 13), it clearly follows that the doctrine of the true Church must be the same

that was preached and taught by the Apostles. Hence we read of the first Christians, "They were persevering in the doctrine of the Apostles" (Acts ii. 42). (3) The Church is apostolic in her mission. Besides the power of order which our Lord conferred upon his Apostles,—that is, besides making them Bishops and priests, by giving them power to offer sacrifice and to forgive sins,—we see that our Blessed Saviour further bestowed upon them authority to exercise these powers. He gave them what is called a mission, *i. e.* a right to exercise their spiritual office in behalf of the faithful. "As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you" (St. John xx. 21). St. Paul refers to this necessity of mission or jurisdiction in his Epistle to the Romans (ch. x. 14, 15). "How shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? or how shall they believe Him, of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach *unless they be sent?*" Without the right of mission or jurisdiction, a person who has been lawfully ordained is like a judge who has not yet been appointed to preside over a court of justice, or to whom no circuit has been assigned in which he is to exercise his judicial functions. This power of mission was given to the Apostles to be exercised throughout the world, and, like the other powers intrusted to them for the good of the Church, to be transmitted to their successors.

CHAP. XXIX. Application of the Marks of the Church.

THE marks of the Church must all be found in the true Church, and in her alone. Having, therefore, seen what these marks are, if we wish to discover the true Church, we have simply to examine in what religious body they are found. A very little consideration will show us that the Catholic Church alone possesses these marks.

I. (1) Wherever the Catholic Church exists throughout the world, all her members believe exactly the same doctrine; they all hold the same articles of faith, and inculcate the same principles of morality, however differ-

ent may be their opinions on all other subjects. (2) Every where they have the same sacraments and the same sacrifice; every where the children of the Church are furnished with the same great means of salvation. (3) They all acknowledge and obey one supreme ruler,—the Bishop of Rome, the Vicar of Christ on earth. The Catholic Church, then, is one in doctrine, in communion, and in government. Nor is this the result of accident; but there exists in the Catholic Church a principle which has preserved her unity in times past, and will insure it throughout all future ages. So long as we believe that Church is infallible in her teaching, and that there exists in the Pope a supreme authority to which all must be subject in spiritual matters, unity must necessarily be maintained.

If now we turn to the various sects of heresy which have from time to time separated themselves from the Church, the very same reason which they allege in their defence others might use with greater justice against them. If they were justified in throwing off the authority of the Church, what authority can they exercise over others? Thus the principle of unity is destroyed, and, as a matter of fact, we see that there is no end to the differences and disunion which exist among them on the most vital doctrines. If we got a number of Protestants in different parts of England to write a clear and concise statement of their belief, the wonder would be if any two of them exactly agreed. So manifestly are Protestants wanting in the first and most essential mark of unity, that it is useless to dwell any longer on what must be obvious to all.

II. The Catholic Church is holy. (1) She teaches a holy doctrine. Her mission has ever been to teach the doctrine of Christ, and to enforce His commands in spite of the opposition of the world, and in spite of what men would call her own interest. Like her Divine Master, she not merely inculcates what is positively necessary to gain heaven, but likewise invites those of her children, who are generous enough to leave all things to serve God, to practise the counsels of perfection. (2) She furnishes all her

children with the means of sanctification by her practices of religion and devotion, by her sacraments and the holy sacrifice of the mass. These sacraments enable the members of the Church to recover sanctity when unhappily lost by mortal sin, and to increase it when they are already *in the state of grace*. (3) The Church is holy by producing saints in every age, whose holiness of life is attested by the miracles which they have performed.

As miracles and prophecies are the divine attestations of the sanctity, not merely of individual members of the Church, but also of the faith and the practices of religion, for whose propagation they were wrought, it will be well for us here to call to mind the promises which our Lord made to illustrate His Church by the continuance of miracles. When He commissioned His Apostles to preach the Gospel throughout the world, He added, "And these signs shall follow them that believe: in My name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they shall drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay their hands upon the sick, and they shall recover" (St. Mark xvi. 17, 18). On another occasion our Lord declared, in still stronger terms, that miracles would attest the sanctity of those who believed in Him. "Amen, amen, I say to you, he that believeth in Me, the works that I do, he also shall do, and greater than these shall he do" (St. John xiv. 12). So clear is it that miracles do not exist out of the Catholic Church, that heretics, for the most part, ridicule the very idea of a miracle happening now. So natural, on the contrary, is the occurrence of miracles in the Church, that there are regular tribunals before which alleged miracles are examined, and minute rules are laid down for distinguishing true from false miracles. We do not pretend that every Catholic works miracles, but God has mercifully vouchsafed to illustrate the Church from age to age, especially in times of trial and difficulty, by such clear manifestations of the divine power, as to make it evident that the finger of God was there. Just in the same way as, in the old law, which was figurative of the Christian dispensation, prophets were

sent from time to time to rouse the faith and piety of the Jewish people, so God exercises the same providential care in raising up saints in His Church. To confine ourselves to a single example: what can be more striking than the number of extraordinary saints who flourished at the period of the Reformation? St. Ignatius, St. Francis Xavier, St. Philip Neri, St. Teresa, St. Charles Borromeo, St. John of the Cross, St. Aloysius, St. Stanislaus, are but some of the more familiar names of the saints who lived at this time. It seems as if God raised up these great servants to manifest the holiness of His Church, at a time when so many were tempted to forsake her bosom. While Europe was scandalised by so many who fell away from the ancient faith, St. Francis Xavier was renewing in the East the glory of the apostolic age, by the many and extraordinary miracles which he wrought, and the countless conversions he made.

Before leaving the subject of the sanctity of the Church, it is to be observed that when we say that the Church is holy, it is not meant to be implied that all her members are holy. In the same way as we speak of a college or university as learned, because it keeps up a succession of learned members, so the Church is holy because she keeps up a succession of saints. Any religious body professing to be the true Church, and pretending to be necessarily holy in all its members, would prove clearly that it was not the Church of Christ. For our Lord furnished His Church with the means of forgiving sins, and with other means of sanctification, which clearly showed that His Church would contain a mixture of good and bad. He also frequently inculcated the same truth in parables which refer to the Church. Thus the kingdom of heaven (by which in the following parables is meant the Church Militant), is compared to a net cast into the sea, and gathering together of all kinds of fishes (St. Matt. xiii. 47); to a marriage feast, to which both good and bad were invited, and where one was present who had not on a wedding garment (St. Matt. xxii.); to ten virgins, of whom five were wise and five foolish

(St. Matt. xxv.); to a fold which contained both sheep and goats (St. Matt. xxv. 33). We have also a figure of the same truth in the ark of Noah, which contained both clean and unclean animals. But even in her wicked members the holiness of the Church is shown forth; for so long as they continue in sin they are in rebellion against her laws and maxims, and when they forsake their evil ways they come to the Church to receive back their lost holiness, and to obtain the means of perseverance for the time to come. On the other hand, the various sects of heresy, by removing so many of the restraints which the Catholic Church places on the passions, such as fastings, penances, mortification, and the practice of confession, have prepared the way for numberless sins. Moreover, these sins are sometimes the direct consequences of their false doctrine. Those, *e.g.*, who with Luther hold that they are saved by faith alone, no matter how many sins they commit, will naturally be little solicitous in curbing their evil inclinations and resisting temptation to sin.

III. Catholic. (1) The Catholic Church has existed in all times from her foundation by Christ Himself. Her unbroken succession from the beginning is clearly shown in the long line of Pontiffs who have succeeded St. Peter in the See of Rome. St. Paul gives thanks to God through Jesus Christ, because the faith of the Romans is spoken of in the whole world (Rom. i. 8); and ever since his day Rome has been conspicuous as the centre of that faith which, as in the days of the Apostles, is still spoken of in the whole world. (2) The Church is Catholic in place, because her members exist in greater or less numbers all over the world. Traverse the whole habitable globe, and you will scarce find a corner, however small, to which the missionaries of the Catholic Church have not penetrated to publish the glad tidings of salvation. (3) The Church is Catholic in her doctrine, because she maintains the whole truth. Even those who are separated from her bosom generally confess that the Church teaches all the essential doctrines of Christianity. Their quarrel with her is, that she teaches too much, and not that she teaches too little.

It is scarcely worth our while to show that heretics do not possess the note of Catholicity. The origin of each heresy, and the name of its founder, can be easily pointed out, and the countries in which it has flourished. With regard to the heresies of our own time, the oldest of them owe their origin to the revolt from the Church in the sixteenth century; and consequently they arose much too late to pretend to the title of Catholicity.

IV. Apostolic. (1) The Catholic Church, and she alone, can trace the succession of her supreme pastors, in an unbroken line, from the present day to the time when St. Peter was appointed the first Pope by Christ Himself; and by communion with the Bishops of Rome, which is the only apostolic see wherein the succession of pastors has been preserved without interruption, the whole Catholic Church proves the apostolicity of her descent. (2) The Church is apostolic in her doctrine. Those who pretend that the doctrines of the Catholic Church have not come down to us from the Apostles, cannot point out when or by whom the truths to which they object were first introduced. When they attempt any thing of the kind, it generally happens that they fix on the period when those doctrines were first denied. For it is no doubt true that, when heretics begin to controvert any article of faith, the defence of that doctrine is more systematically and prominently brought out. But we may cite the different sects of heretics themselves as unexceptionable witnesses in behalf of the Church. For the heretics, who, from the earliest ages, have at different times gone forth from her communion, testify to the apostolicity of those doctrines which they hold in common with the Church, while the erroneous doctrines which they have taught have been alike condemned by the Church, and by other heretical teachers who have gone before or come after them.

(3) The Catholic Church is apostolic in her orders and mission. The greatest care has always been taken in the Church to preserve the succession of her pastors, who are lawfully ordained, and receive their commission and authority to preach and teach from the successors of the Apostles. Indeed, unless we admit the apostolicity of the

orders and mission of the Catholic Church, we shall be obliged to confess that the promises of Christ have not been fulfilled, and that His Church, which was to last to the end of the world, and against which the gates of hell should not prevail, has actually fallen away. For all who claim the note of apostolicity are obliged to trace their descent through the Bishops of the Catholic Church. Unless, therefore, the Catholic Church possesses the mark of apostolicity, the Apostolic Church must have ceased to exist, which would be contrary to the promises of Christ. It is a remarkable fact connected with this subject, that the preaching of the missionaries sent forth by the Catholic Church has always been attended with more or less marked success in the conversion of unbelievers, whereas the missions established by heretical bodies have invariably proved barren and fruitless. Heretics possess power in destroying or perverting the faith of those who believe, but not in planting the faith where it does not exist.

CHAP. XXX. Infallibility of the Church.

THE Church is infallible in her teaching in reference to faith and morals; that is to say, she is assisted by the Holy Spirit in understanding the extent and meaning of the revealed truth of God; so that she cannot propose any doctrine as true which is false, nor condemn any doctrine as evil which is in reality good.

The infallibility of the Church may be deduced from many clear passages of Holy Scripture. Thus she is called by St. Paul, "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. iii. 15). Again, our Lord promises to build the Church on a rock, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail (St. Matt. xvi. 18). And still more plainly, we are told that Christ would be always with His Church (St. Matt. xxviii.), and that the Holy Spirit would abide with her for ever, for the express purpose of guiding her into all truth: "I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you for ever" (St. John xiv. 16). The object of this perpetual presence

of the Holy Spirit in the Church is declared a few verses later in the same chapter: "The Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatever I have said to you" (St. John xiv. 26). Again, "when the Spirit of Truth is come, He will teach you all truth" (St. John xvi. 13).

Again, as Jesus Christ Himself is infallible, so is His Church, because He has substituted her in His own place. "As the Father hath sent Me, so I also send you" (St. John xx. 21). "He that heareth you heareth Me, and he that despiseth you despiseth Me" (St. Luke x. 16). Finally, not to dwell on several other arguments, eternal life is promised to those who hear and obey the pastors of the Church, while eternal condemnation is threatened against those who will not believe. For immediately after our Lord gave to His Apostles the commission to preach the Gospel to every creature, He added, "he that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned" (St. Mark xvi. 16). Now on the supposition that the teachers of the Church are not preserved by the divine assistance from the possibility of false doctrine in faith and morals, the following case might occur. The Church might propose some false doctrine as an article of faith to her children, and according to the declaration of our Lord, he who would believe this false doctrine to be a revealed truth of God, would be saved; while he who, perceiving that it was false, refused to believe, would be condemned.

This infallibility resides in the collective teaching of the Bishops of the Church, to whom, in the persons of the Apostles, the promises of Christ were made. When assembled in general council, they declare any doctrine to be the revealed truth of God, and the Pope, as head of the Church, approves of their decision; we believe that the Holy Spirit so enlightens their minds and guides their judgment that they cannot go wrong. Thus we have an instance in the lifetime of the Apostles themselves of the way in which the Church acts when disputes arise. The Apostles assembled in council at Jerusalem, and the de-

cision being approved by St. Peter, was published among the faithful in the following manner: "It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, to lay no further burden upon you than these necessary things," &c. (Acts xv. 28). The decision is attributed to the Holy Spirit; for it is not on account of the learning of those who meet in council that we so reverence their decrees, but on account of their office as the Bishops and teachers of God's Church, to whom the guidance of the Holy Spirit has been solemnly promised. When a general council meets, we do not pretend that those who assemble receive a new revelation; but they are divinely assisted and enlightened, in virtue of the unfailing promise of God, so as to know what has been revealed as well as its true meaning.

So much, then, is perfectly certain: the decrees of a general council relative to faith and morals which are confirmed by the Pope are infallible. It is also held as certain by the majority of theologians,—though it is not an article of faith,—that the Pope is infallible when he instructs the whole Church, as her Head, in matters of faith and morals. For the Pope, as the successor of St. Peter, is the rock on which the Church is built. Now if the foundation be fallible, the superstructure must be liable to fall together with it; and therefore the personal infallibility of the Pope seems a necessary basis for the infallibility of the Church. Again, we cannot suppose that the prayer of our Lord Himself would be denied. Since, then, He prayed that the faith of Peter might not fail, we may be sure it never will fail: "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he might sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not" (St. Luke xxii. 31, 32).

We do not say the Pope is infallible as a private person. If, for instance, he wrote a book on theology, we should treat it as the work of a learned Bishop; but we should not accept the opinions which it expressed as the decrees of an infallible authority. Or, again, if he wrote a letter to some particular Bishop, expressing his sentiments on any theological difficulty, we should receive his opinion with the greatest respect, but we should not consider it

infallible. When, however, the Pope addresses the universal Church as her supreme doctor and head, and requires certain doctrines to be believed, under pain of exclusion from the communion of the faithful, we hold that in such circumstances, and on such occasions, he is acting under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. But however firmly we believe the infallibility of the Sovereign Pontiff, under the restrictions which we have mentioned, we by no means believe that he is incapable of sinning; for he has free-will, like all others, and a soul to save equally with the lowliest of his subjects. His infallibility, like that of the Church, is due to the guidance of the Holy Spirit acting in him and by him. It is a privilege granted to him by God, for the benefit of the universal Church; while his free-will and power to commit sin belong to him, not in his official, but in his private and individual capacity. The following illustration will explain this. If we had a firm conviction that one of our judges was so learned in the law as to make it impossible for him to be mistaken in explaining its provisions, we should not therefore believe that it was impossible for him to break the laws of his country in any way. The reliance which on this supposition we repose in the learning of the judge, we place still more in the Pope, because we do not build on human knowledge, which after all may be sometimes at fault, but on the infallible guidance of the spirit of truth. The difference between those who admit and those who deny the Papal infallibility is practically of very little moment, for all allow that the decrees of the Pope are infallible as soon as they have been accepted by the Church.

CHAP. XXXI. The Communion of Saints.

WE have seen that the faithful throughout the world constitute one body, who are united together by professing one and the same faith, by acknowledging one Supreme Ruler, and by partaking of the same spiritual benefits. This last link in the triple bond, by which the members of the Church are held together, leads us to the explanation

of what is meant by the communion of saints. In the same way as in a well-ordered family all things are in common, and each one labours for the good of the rest; so in the Church there is a constant mutual interchange of good offices among her various members, and no one works exclusively for his own benefit, but each is assisted by the prayers and good works of all the rest; or, to express the same truth by another familiar illustration, as the various members of the human body are given for the general good of the whole body, and of each of its several parts, so in the Church there are different ranks and distinctions, various degrees of virtue and holiness, but all work together for the edification of the Church and of each other. Again, as in the human body, each member must be in a healthy state in order adequately to serve the purpose for which it was designed, and fully to profit by the advantages derived from the other members,—for a limb which is paralysed can neither be used for the good of the body, nor partake adequately in the benefits conferred by its union with the rest of the members,—so the members of the Church, which is the mystical body of Christ, ought to be in the state of grace in order to contribute their share to the advantages implied by the communion of the saints, and to participate to the full extent in the benefits derived from the other members.

Hitherto, where the Church has been spoken of, the Church militant has been meant, or the body of the faithful who are still upon earth struggling to overcome the enemies of their souls, and to obtain the crown of victory which is promised them in heaven. But to understand fully what is meant by the communion of saints, we must bear in mind that the Church includes in her membership all the faithful who have departed this life in the grace and friendship of God. Besides the faithful on earth, there are some who belong to the Church who have ended their battle, secured their victory, and are in possession of their eternal crowns. These form the Church triumphant. There are also others who have ended their warfare in the grace of God, but who have yet been stained with venial sins, or have taken with them a debt of temporal punish-

ment due to their past sins. These are detained in Purgatory till they are perfectly purified in its cleansing fires, and have fully discharged the debt of temporal punishment due to their transgressions. They constitute what is called the Church suffering. These three divisions do not form three Churches, but three states, into which the members of the one Church of Christ are distributed.

As no one calls in question the existence of the Church militant or of the Church triumphant, that is, of the faithful on earth, or of the saints and angels in heaven, all that has here to be done is to show that there is a purgatory.

1. Reason, no less than the repeated declaration of holy Scripture, tells us that God will render to every man according to his works. Now, applying this principle to the different conditions in which men are found at the hour of death, it will lead us necessarily to infer the existence of Purgatory. For, if some die pure and holy, and are immediately admitted into heaven, if others carry with them out of this world a heavy load of guilt which will bring upon them everlasting condemnation, there is also an intermediate class who are free from great sins, but yet are not perfectly pure in the sight of God. These souls cannot at once enter heaven, because nothing defiled can be admitted into that abode of holiness; but still they will not be condemned eternally, because, as we are supposing, their guilt, though real, is but small. Again, persons who have committed mortal sins may repent and obtain their forgiveness; but the dispositions of true penitents are very various, that is, some are far less perfect than others. Some, besides being exceedingly sorry for their offences, practise many virtues and perform severe penances to appease the wrath of God, provoked by their transgressions, while others content themselves with what is barely necessary for the pardon of sin; and though both will have the guilt of their sins taken away,—because we are assuming that both are really penitent,—still, God in His infinite justice will deal differently with them. Those who have done sufficient penance will be admitted at once into heaven, while the others will have to discharge in

Purgatory the debt of temporal punishment still due to their sins.

2. It was a practice of the Jewish Church, as we learn from the Second Book of Machabees (ii. 46), to pray for the dead, a practice which our Blessed Lord would no doubt have condemned had it been erroneous. But so far are we from finding any thing either in the sacred Scripture or tradition to discountenance prayer for the dead, that, on the contrary, we find the custom of the Jews confirmed from the earliest times by its adoption in the Christian Church. Now this practice, both of the Synagogue and of the Christian Church, implies a purgatory; for the saints in heaven stand in no need of prayer, while the condemned in hell cannot be benefited by prayer (St. Matt. xvi. 26).

3. The doctrine of Purgatory, though not distinctly mentioned, is implied in several places of the sacred Scripture; that is, there are several texts which can only be properly understood by the supposition of a purgatory. Thus when our Blessed Lord assures us (St. Matt. xii. 36) that we shall have to render an account on the day of judgment for every idle word which we have spoken, we cannot suppose that these small faults will pass unpunished, or that they will bring upon us eternal condemnation. Again, our Blessed Saviour tells us, "He that shall speak against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him neither in this world, nor in the world to come" (St. Matt. xii. 32); from which words we may infer, with St. Augustine and St. Gregory, that some sins are forgiven in the next world. Now this can only be in the middle state which we call Purgatory; for in heaven there is no sin, and in hell no redemption. Again, St. Paul (1 Cor. iii. 13-15) speaks of some who have built on the right foundation, which is Christ, but still their good works, represented by gold, silver, and precious stones, are mixed with imperfections, which he denotes by wood, hay, and stubble. He tells us that these shall be manifested on the day of the Lord, that is, on the day of judgment, and that *they*, i.e. the Christians, shall be saved yet so as by fire. The figure here used by the Apostle refers to the manner in

which gold is purified from any alloy or baser substance with which it has been mixed. As, then, gold is melted in the furnace till the pure metal is entirely separated from the dross, so the souls of the just who depart this life in the grace of God, but yet are stained with smaller sins and imperfections, shall be purified and refined by passing through the cleansing flames of Purgatory. They shall be saved, yet so as by fire.

Having seen the three different states in which the Church exists, it is more easy to understand the full bearing of the doctrine of the communion of saints. We have already implied that, by the administration and reception of the Sacraments, by the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, by the prayers and good works of the faithful, the whole Church militant and each of its members mutually help and assist one another. We have now to explain how the Church militant, the Church triumphant, and the Church suffering, assist each other. Between the faithful on earth and the saints and angels in heaven there is a constant mutual interchange of good offices. By honouring the saints and angels, by desiring their prayers, by thanking God for the benefits He has bestowed upon them, and by imitating their good example, we promote the accidental glory with which they are crowned in heaven. Nay, the blessed in heaven seem to derive fresh happiness from the virtues which we practise on earth; for our Divine Lord assures us "there shall be joy before the angels of God upon one sinner doing penance" (St. Luke xv. 10). The saints and angels, on their side, greatly assist us by watching over us, and praying for us, and obtaining for us many graces and helps towards the salvation of our souls. This subject will be farther illustrated in treating of prayer.

The souls in purgatory also partake in the benefits which come from the communion of the saints. By praying for them, by making satisfaction to God in their stead, and by gaining indulgences in their behalf, we lessen their sufferings and shorten the time of their exile from their heavenly home. On their part, though they are in a state in which they can no longer merit for themselves, it is piously believed they have the power of assisting us by

their prayers. But even supposing they are now helpless both as regards us and themselves, we cannot doubt that when they reach heaven, they will pray most earnestly for those who have assisted them in purgatory.

CHAP. XXXII.

Tenth Article: "The Forgiveness of Sins." Original Sin.

By this Article the Apostles teach us that Christ has left in His Church the power to forgive sins. It will be shown, when the Sacraments are treated of, to whom this power has been given, and what are the means appointed by our Lord for the remission of sin. To avoid repetition, our attention will here be confined to the explanation of the nature and the different kinds of sin, and of such questions as naturally arise out of the subject-matter in hand. By sin we mean any thought, word, deed, or omission against the law of God. There are two kinds of sin, namely, original and actual. Original sin is that in which we were conceived, or of which the stain appeared in our soul from the first moment of its union with the body, in consequence of Adam's sin in eating the forbidden fruit. When God created the first man, He raised him to a supernatural state. He endowed him with most excellent gifts of grace, by which all his inferior appetites and passions were subject to reason and conscience. His reason also was so enlightened in understanding the excellence of the Divine nature, that it tended constantly and in all things to make him submit to the ever-blessed will of God. This happy state of original justice was not a necessary part of man's nature, but was something superadded and gratuitously given him by the Divine bounty. It was a gift bestowed on him and his posterity; but as all free gifts are at the absolute disposal of Him to whom they primarily belong, the continuance of original justice was made conditional on Adam's fidelity to the command of God. For when the first man was created, he in a manner represented the whole human race, and

our wills were contained in his. If he had persevered in original justice, we should have come into this world in a supernatural state and well-pleasing in the sight of God. But as Adam fell, we too are involved in the consequences of his fall: "As by one man sin entered into this world, and by sin death; and so death passed upon all men in whom all have sinned" (Rom. v. 12). It is generally held that original sin properly consists in the deprivation of original justice, in which Adam was created. It is not strictly correct to call it the sin in which we are born, but it is the sin in which we are conceived. The prophet Jeremias (Jer. i. 5) and St. John the Baptist (St. Luke i. 41 *et seq.*) both incurred the stain of original sin in their conception, yet both were sanctified in their mother's womb, and came into this world pure and holy.

All the miseries and calamities of this life—the sicknesses, pains, sorrows, and death—to which we are all liable, trace their beginning to original sin. Nor is it simply in the body that we have suffered, but much more in the soul. Besides depriving us of the grace and friendship of God, and exposing us to the risk of being for ever excluded from the kingdom of heaven, original sin has left in the soul, even after its guilt has been remitted, many obstacles to the practice of virtue. The principal of these are those four wounds which have been inflicted on the powers of the soul. 1. Ignorance, which leaves the understanding in darkness about the truths of faith, the beauty of virtue, and many other things which would help us in the service of God. 2. Malice, which makes the will place little value on spiritual things, and occupy itself almost exclusively on such as are temporal. 3. Concupiscence, which is sometimes used in a wide sense, so as to embrace all the disorders left in the powers of the soul by original sin, but by which we here mean the tendency of our appetites and desires to material and sensible gratifications, in spite of the dictates of reason and conscience. 4. Weakness, or a want of strength and resolution in the pursuit of virtue or in avoiding vice. The sin of Adam has been transmitted

by generation to all mankind, except the Blessed Virgin, who, by a special privilege and grace of God, through the merits of her Son, was conceived without the stain of original sin.

CHAP. XXXIII. The Immaculate Conception.

By the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, we mean that this most favoured creature of God, in the first moment of her existence and of the infusion of her blessed soul into her body, was by a special grace and privilege of God, and through the future merits of Jesus Christ, preserved from original sin. This exemption of the Blessed Virgin from the common lot of the children of Adam, has been declared an article of faith by the Catholic Church, and therefore must be received as a revealed truth of God. The following are some of the grounds of our belief of this doctrine.

The close relationship into which the Blessed Virgin was brought, by the mystery of the Incarnation, to the three Persons of the Ever-blessed Trinity, made it fitting that she should be conceived without stain. Chosen from all eternity to be the mother of God, she was always, in virtue of the Divine adoption, regarded by the Eternal Father as His own most cherished daughter. It was therefore becoming for the honour of His Son, that He should bestow special endowments on Mary, and preserve her from every defilement of guilt. But if the Father's choice of Mary to be the mother of His Son prompted Him to honour her as His most dear daughter, how much more would the Son honour her as His mother! He who was the Only-begotten of the Father, and the source of all holiness and virtue, would certainly choose for His mother one who had always been immaculate. He condescended to become man of her; so that her flesh and blood was His flesh and blood, and, as He could not take to Himself any thing that was not holy, her body and soul must always have been pure and holy. The honour and reverence which was due to her as His mother would

make Him preserve her from all shadow of guilt; and His own honour and infinite sanctity forbade Him to make His own mother any thing which was not most holy. He came to redeem all mankind, but love prompted Him to begin with His mother; and as she is the most exalted of creatures, so would He redeem her in a more perfect and more glorious way than the rest of the human race. Others were redeemed after they had fallen. Mary was preserved from falling. So singular and so perfect was her redemption that she seems in her canticle to claim the whole work of redemption as in a special sense her own: "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour" (St. Luke ii. 46, 47).

The Holy Spirit, also the sanctifier of just souls, chose Mary by the mystery of the Incarnation as His Spouse, and therefore He enriched her soul with all the beauty of grace which befitted her exalted dignity. He inspired the words of the canticle which the Church applies to our Blessed Lady: "Thou art all fair, O my love, and there is not a spot in thee" (Canticles iv. 7).

God always proportions His gifts and graces to the office or state to which He calls us. As, therefore, Mary was chosen to be the mother of God,—as, that is, she was raised to an eminence far above all other creatures,—God must have bestowed upon her endowments far greater than were conferred upon any other pure creature. As her prerogative as mother of God exalts her so immeasurably above the highest among the angels or saints, we may be sure that no privilege which has ever been enjoyed by any of these blessed spirits, so far as it would render her more fitting for the office to which she was called, would be denied her. For can we suppose the mother would be refused any thing which had been bestowed on the servant? If, then, God created the angels, who were simply to be His messengers and servants, pure and immaculate, we cannot suppose that He would do less for Mary. If even Adam and Eve came into this world free from every stain of guilt, can we suppose Mary would be less favoured? As Adam is a figure of our Lord, so is Eve a figure of the

Blessed Virgin, and in nothing more worthily than in the stainless purity in which she began her existence.

And if we look to one or two of the passages of Holy Scripture which undoubtedly refer to our Blessed Lady, we shall see how clearly they point to her Immaculate Conception. Thus, if we take the earliest recorded prophecy of Scripture,—“I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed; she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel” (Gen. iii. 15),—it can only be fully understood when interpreted so as to imply the Immaculate Conception. For this was no common enmity which is predicted between the woman and the serpent, that is, between the Blessed Virgin and the devil: it was not simply the opposition which exists between all the saints and the rebel angels, but it is something special and peculiar, which implies an unbroken enmity from the first moment of her existence. She, according to the words of the prophecy, is to crush the serpent’s head; and therefore we cannot suppose that she should commence her existence by being his slave, whose power she was chosen by God to destroy.

From the first page of the Old Testament to the first page of the New, from the prophecy to its fulfilment, the transition is easy. Mary is the woman spoken of in the prophecy of Genesis, and to her the angel is sent to announce its fulfilment by the mystery of the Incarnation: “And the angel being come in, said unto her, Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women” (St. Luke i. 28). As in the prophecy, so in its accomplishment, a special fulness of grace is implied; and not simply a recovered grace and innocence such as belongs to all who have been forgiven, but it is a fulness which never, from the first moment of her existence, left her blessed soul without treasures of unspeakable beauty and holiness. The Lord is with her in a way in which He is with no other child of Adam. He is with her, preserving her soul from every shadow of guilt, and making it the abiding resting-place of His sanctifying grace; and hence she is blessed above all the holy women whose virtues and holiness of life have made them pleasing in the

sight of God. She is blessed above her cousin St. Elizabeth; for though we are assured that St. Elizabeth "was just before God, walking in all the commandments and justifications of the Lord without blame" (St. Luke i. 6), yet, unlike Mary, she had been conceived in original sin. She is blessed above all others, because the fruit of her womb is infinitely blessed; and as her divine Son, in virtue of the hypostatical union, was always "full of grace and truth" (St. John i. 14), so likewise was Mary, in virtue of the divine Maternity, always full of grace.

CHAP. XXXIV. Actual Sin.

By actual sin we understand that which we ourselves commit, as distinguished from the sin in which we were conceived. Actual sins vary in the degree of their guilt according as they are more or less opposed to the Divine will. Some are so grievous that they altogether cut us off from the grace and friendship of God. These are called mortal sins, because they destroy sanctifying grace, which is the spiritual life of the soul. There are other sins which, though displeasing in the sight of God, do not absolutely exclude us from His love, nor take away the spiritual life of the soul. These sins are called venial, because they are more easily pardoned than mortal sins. It is of the highest importance for us to be able to distinguish between mortal and venial sins. This difference, therefore, shall here be explained as clearly as the case admits of.

Mortal Sin. To constitute a mortal sin three conditions are required :

1st. There must be grievous matter; that is, the sinful object, or the duty which we neglect, or the precept which we violate, must be something of serious importance. For example, the matter of the sin of theft is the thing stolen, which must be of some value to make a mortal sin. Thus every act which shows great disrespect to God, or to the honour and worship due to God, is a mortal sin; every serious breach of the charity or justice which we owe to our neighbours or ourselves is also a mortal sin.

2. There must be clear knowledge of the malice of the act, or at least a belief or suspicion that what we are doing may be grievously wrong. With persons who are leading ordinarily good lives, that is, who are habitually disposed rather to suffer any loss than deliberately offend God by any grievous sin, it is necessary that there should always be an actual and present advertence to the sinfulness of what they are doing, in order to make a mortal sin. With regard, however, to such as have wilfully destroyed the voice of their conscience, or formed for themselves a false conscience, by purposely continuing in ignorance of their duty, or by long indulgence of their passions and confirmed habits of sin, there are some writers who deny the necessity of any present or actual advertence to render their actions grievously sinful in the sight of God. Practically, however, it makes little difference whether we say that each distinct act of which they are guilty is a separate mortal sin, or whether we say they are answerable in the cause for all the sinful consequences which result from the ignorance or negligence in which they have deliberately determined to live, or from the bad habit which they have wilfully and knowingly contracted.

3. There must be full consent of the will. If as soon as we perceive that the action which we are tempted to perform is sinful, we at once reject the temptation, there is no sin. If, however, there be a half consent, it is of course wrong, both because it is an offence of God and because of the danger to which we expose ourselves of giving full consent; but still, so long as the consent is imperfect, the sin is only venial. This kind of half consent is not uncommon with persons who have not attained the full use of reason, or who are insufficiently instructed, or who, from sudden fear, or from not being perfectly awake, or from any other cause, act without being fully conscious of what they are doing. The most difficult cases of this kind are doubts respecting sins of thought, when, from the violence of the temptation, or from want of promptness in rejecting it in the beginning, a person knows not whether he has consented or not. The following rules will be of great service to us in forming a correct opinion.

1. In all cases of doubt, the probability is on the side of what usually happens. If a person generally yields to temptation, and makes little or no struggle to overcome it, the presumption is against him in any given case. If, however, his past experience be in his favour, if he seldom or never consents to a known mortal sin, he will be right in taking the benefit of the doubt.

2. We may presume that there was no full consent in a case of doubt when there was nothing to hinder a person from carrying out a sinful intention, who yet has abstained from doing so.

3. It would be a clear sign that full consent had not been given if, on reflecting that the mind has been occupied with sinful thoughts, or that there is at least great danger of consent, the person is struck with fear and sorrow, and is anxious to get rid of the temptation as soon as possible.

CHAP. XXXV. Mortal Sin and its Effects.

IN speaking of the necessity of the Incarnation, it was shown that mortal sin, being an offence against an all-perfect, all-good God, contains, as far as is possible, an infinite malice. It is impossible for us to form an adequate idea of its enormity, but the consideration of some of the consequences which it entails will help us to understand its heinousness.

1. Mortal sin deprives us of all the merit of our previous good works; so that if we die under the guilt of a single mortal sin, no matter however much merit we had acquired before its commission, we shall not be rewarded for it: "All his justices which he hath done shall not be remembered" (Ezekiel xviii. 24). It is true, this merit will revive, provided we have the happiness to recover the grace of God; but so long as the soul is stained with mortal guilt, we are deprived of all the merit of our previous good works.

2. So long as mortal sin exists in the soul, no matter what virtues we practise, we can gain no merit in the sight of God. Whatever good works we perform, we

shall not be rewarded for them in heaven. These are all dead works, even if we afterwards recover grace, and die in the friendship of God. But we must not consider these virtues as useless, for in spite of the sin which is in the soul, they are still real acts of virtue; and though they will not entitle us to a reward in heaven, nor, strictly speaking, merit for us the grace of repentance, yet, in consideration of these good works, God may, out of His infinite goodness and mercy, enable us once more to regain His friendship.

3. Mortal sin is so great an evil, that an infinitely good, infinitely just God, who delights to manifest His almighty power by forgiving and showing mercy, and whose punishments fall short of our deserts, condemns every one who dies under the guilt of but one such sin to everlasting torments. Every mortal sin, then, contains so much malice, that an eternity of suffering more terrible than any thing we can imagine is its only adequate punishment.

But though mortal sin be so great an evil, and though some mortal sins are far more grievous than others, there is no sin, however enormous, which may not be forgiven. When our Blessed Lord promised His Apostles the power of forgiving sins, He made no limitation or exception. His word is pledged to ratify in heaven the sentence which they should pronounce upon earth: "Amen, I say to you, whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven" (St. Matt. xviii. 18). "Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them: and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained" (St. John xx. 23). However black, therefore, has been the guilt of the sinner, the Church has received power to forgive him, provided he be truly penitent: "If the wicked do penance for all his sins which he hath committed, and keep My commandments, and do judgment, and justice, living he shall live, and shall not die. I will not remember all his iniquities that he hath done: in his justice which he hath wrought, he shall live" (Ezekiel xviii. 21, 22). If there are certain passages of

Holy Scripture which at first sight would seem to imply that there are some sins which cannot be forgiven, no more is meant than that there is a special malice in these sins which makes their forgiveness very difficult. "The blasphemy of the Spirit," which our Lord tells us shall not be forgiven (St. Matt. xii. 31), refers, according to the explanation of the best interpreters, to the sin of the Pharisees in resisting the plain truth, and attributing the manifest miracles of Christ to the devil. This was a sin of malice, and is therefore said to be against the Holy Ghost, to whom goodness is specially attributed; as sins of ignorance are said to be against the Son, to whom wisdom or knowledge is ascribed, and sins of infirmity are said to be against the Father, whose characteristic attribute is power.

CHAP. XXXVI. Venial Sin and its Effects.

EVERY actual sin which does not contain the three conditions necessary to make a mortal sin is a venial sin. 1. Thus, if the matter be small, the sin is only venial. It will, of course, be understood that circumstances sometimes quite change the nature of the case, and make a serious matter of what is usually of small moment. Thus to take an apple contrary to the Divine command not to steal would be only a venial sin; but when our first parents took of the forbidden fruit, they committed a mortal sin, because God had expressly chosen this prohibition to test their submission to Him, and had distinctly told them that death would be the penalty of their disobedience. Again, he who erroneously believed the matter to be great, and so did what he thought to be a great offence against God, would commit a mortal sin; because the greatness of the matter of a sin, considered in the person who commits it, must be estimated, not simply by what it is in its own nature, but by what it is believed to be in the mind of that person. 2. If there be no knowledge, nor suspicion that the thing which we are doing is wrong, there is no sin; and if the knowledge be imperfect, the sin is only venial. This, as already explained, will often be the case

with those who have not fully come to the use of reason, or are imperfectly instructed, or who are only half-conscious of what they are doing.

3. The sin is only venial when the consent of the will is imperfect. This has been already explained in what has been said on the conditions which are required to make a mortal sin.

We shall now be in a position easily to understand the four ways in which a venial sin is sometimes said to be made mortal. 1. When a person commits a venial sin with such an affection to it that he is resolved to commit it though it were mortal. 2. When the end for which it is done is a mortal sin. In both these cases, it is not so much the act which is performed, as the evil disposition of the heart, and the bad intention accompanying the act, which constitute the mortal sin. 3. When a person perceives that by committing a venial sin he will give occasion to a mortal sin, by scandal or any other way. Here the circumstance that we know that our action will be the occasion of a great sin in another, makes the matter grievous which would otherwise be small. 4. When a person commits that which is in itself only a venial sin, and yet thinks in his conscience it is a mortal sin. It has already been stated, that in judging of past sins we must estimate the matter not by what it is in its own nature, but by what it was conceived to be by the person at the time the act was performed.

As to the effects of venial sin, they are as follows :

1. Venial sin weakens and cools the fervour of charity. As small illnesses undermine the strength of the body, so venial sins weaken the soul.

2. In consequence of venial sins, we are deprived of many graces which would otherwise be bestowed upon us, and the graces which we receive have not free scope to fructify in the soul. For as the good grain can with difficulty grow up in the ground which is covered with weeds, so a soul subject to venial sin can with difficulty grow in holiness.

3. Venial sins, especially when fully deliberate, dispose the soul for mortal sin; according to the admonition of

Ecclesiasticus (xix. 1), "he that contemneth small things, shall fall by little and little."

4. Venial sins are deserving of very severe chastisements. God has sometimes sent heavy calamities even in this world in punishment of small sins, and as in the world to come mortal sin is punished with the fire of hell, so is venial sin punished with the fire of purgatory. But though venial sin be a very great evil, there is always a wide difference between it and mortal sin. No number of venial sins, however great, will of themselves destroy the grace of God in the soul, or make a mortal sin. It is true there are some sins which are venial by reason of the smallness of the matter, and which would never exceed venial guilt, considered in themselves one by one, and apart from their connexion one with another, but yet, taken altogether, lead to mortal sin in a way which must be now explained. He who goes on day after day committing small thefts, though no one of these acts apart from the rest would be more than a venial sin, would soon commit a mortal sin. That is, the time would come when the matter of the theft, joined to what had been previously stolen, would be of sufficient importance to constitute matter for mortal sin. But this is a very different thing from what has been stated above, viz. that no multiplication of venial sins will make a mortal sin.

CHAP. XXXVII.

Eleventh Article: The Resurrection of the Body.

THE truths of faith which have been already explained imply many duties, which are by no means easy to fulfil, surrounded as we are by so many difficulties and temptations. In order, then, to encourage our perseverance in good, the Apostles propose to our belief in the eleventh and twelfth Articles the rewards and punishments of a future life. The eleventh Article refers to the future condition of the body, and the twelfth to that of the soul and body conjointly. We are thus taught that the reality of a future state, in which we shall be for ever rewarded or punished accord-

ing as we have lived, rests on the same infallible certainty as all the other articles of our belief. St. Paul in particular constantly appealed to these truths in his preaching, and laid special stress on the doctrine of a future resurrection. He makes this one doctrine the turning-point of our faith: "If there be no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen again. And if Christ be not risen again, our preaching is vain, and your faith is also vain" (1 Cor. xv. 13, 14). He is not content with publishing the doctrine of the resurrection over and over again; it seems as though he deemed it not sufficient to make it known as a revealed truth; but he shows us its fitness by various reasonings and analogies, and goes on to declare the gifts and endowments which would belong to the glorified bodies of the just. The writings of this great Apostle furnish of themselves a detailed explanation of the eleventh Article of the Creed.

As by death we mean the separation of the soul from the body, so by the resurrection we mean the reunion of the body and soul. We are taught to believe the resurrection of the body, because as the body alone turns to corruption, so it alone can be said to rise again. All will rise again, both the good and the bad, in the same bodies in which they have lived upon earth. "The good will awake to life everlasting, the wicked to reproach" (Dan. xii. 2). All, both good and bad, will live for ever, the good for their unspeakable happiness, the bad for endless misery. "They that have done good things," says St. John, "shall come forth unto the resurrection of life, but they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment" (St. John v. 29).

The whole of the fifteenth chapter of St. Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians is occupied with the doctrine of a future resurrection. He proves the possibility of a resurrection from the fact of Christ's resurrection. If it be impossible for the dead to rise again, then Christ is not risen again, and consequently the preaching of the Apostles, which is based on this fact, is false. Nay, the denial of the resurrection not only strikes at the very foundation of the Christian religion, but destroys all morality; because, if we take away the hope of the future, they who

deny themselves the pleasures of this life, in the pursuit of virtue, would be of all men the most miserable, since they would throw away the enjoyment of the present time without receiving any compensation in the future. Take away the hope of the life to come, and we should no longer have a motive for the practice of virtue; but the object of our life would be summed up in the maxim, "let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die." But the fact of the resurrection of Christ being placed beyond the possibility of a doubt by the testimony of numerous eye-witnesses, many of whom were still living at the time St. Paul wrote, we have a certain pledge that we too shall rise again. For as on account of Adam's sin all men die, so through the merits of Christ all shall rise again. To Him is promised dominion over all His enemies; and when all others have been subdued, death shall finally be overcome; and as from Adam we receive a natural and mortal life, so from Jesus Christ we shall receive a spiritual and immortal life on the day of the resurrection. But it may be asked, How can that which is corrupted and destroyed be restored to life? Even as the seed which is buried in the earth and dies, before it is quickened with a new life and rises again before our eyes, so shall our mortal bodies put on immortality; and then shall come to pass the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?" (1 Cor. xv. 54).

Such is the reasoning by which St. Paul proves the doctrine of a future resurrection. The next thing is to examine in what state we shall rise again. All will rise in the same bodies in which they have lived, in order that they may receive both in the body and soul the rewards or punishments which they have deserved by their actions. "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and on the last day I shall rise out of the earth, and I shall be clothed again with my skin, and in my flesh I shall see my God" (Job xix. 25, 26). If on earth the bodies of some have been mutilated or deformed, they will be restored to their natural integrity and perfection; still the bodies of the wicked will bear the stamp of their vices,

while those of the just will be distinguished by the glory of their penitential sufferings, and the scars of the martyrs' wounds will shine with particular brilliancy, even as the five Wounds of Christ Himself. The glory with which the souls of the blessed are invested will show itself in their bodies, and impart to them these four gifts or endowments.

1. Impassibility, by which we mean, that they will be henceforth incapable of suffering: "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and death shall be no more; nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow shall be any more, for the former things are passed away" (Apoc. xxi. 4).

2. Brightness. They will shine like stars for all eternity. The bodies of all the Blessed will be alike free from suffering, but all will not have an equal brightness. For "one is the glory of the sun, another the glory of the moon, and another the glory of the stars. For star differeth from star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it shall rise in incorruption; it is sown in honour, it shall rise in glory" (1 Cor. xv. 41-43).

3. Agility. The bodies of the just shall be divested of the impediments to their action which now encompass them. Without labour, without fatigue, and swift as thought, they will be able to pass from one extremity of creation to the other. "It is sown in weakness, it shall rise in power."

4. Subtility. The bodies of the saints, like the glorified Body of our Lord, shall become spiritualised. They will be able to pass, as He did, through closed doors, and will not be hindered by any of the obstacles which now prevent their motion from one place to another: "It is sown a natural body, it shall rise a spiritual body" (1 Cor. xv. 44). As these glorious gifts are bestowed on the just in recompense of their virtues, so we may naturally infer that the bodies of the wicked will be punished in some corresponding way. In place of impassibility, they will be endowed with a keen sensibility to pain; in place of brightness, they will be black and terrible to behold; and in place of agility and subtility they will become the prison-house of the soul, weighing down and clogging its spiritual capacities and energies.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

Twelfth Article: Life everlasting.

IN the last Article of the Creed the Apostles teach us that this present life shall be followed by another,—not short and transitory, like our life upon earth, but changeless and eternal;—not mixed with good and evil, at one time depressed by fear and at another full of hope, but a life of unspeakable happiness, or of unutterable and endless misery: “The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and the torments of death shall not touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die, and their departure was taken for misery, and their going away from us for utter destruction; but they are in peace” (Wis. iii. 1-3). The wicked, on the contrary, “shall seek death and shall not find it; and they shall desire to die, and death shall fly from them” (Apoc. ix. 6). The magnificence of God in rewarding His faithful servants, and the severity of His justice in the punishment of all who die rebels to His Divine will, alike surpass our comprehension; and it is only in a very imperfect way that we can picture these things to our imagination. The blessedness of the just has been defined to be a state made perfect by the union of all good things. In the first place, this happy state is freed from all the miseries or pains we endure in this life. There is no hunger or thirst, cold or heat, labour or weariness, no sickness, no sorrow, no death: “They shall no more hunger nor thirst, neither shall the sun fall upon them, nor any heat. For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall rule them, and shall lead them to the fountains of the waters of life, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes” (Apoc. vii. 16, 17). “They shall enter into the joy of their Lord” (St. Matt. xxv. 21), “and be filled with His glory” (Ps. xvi. 15); “they shall shine like the sun” (St. Matt. xiii. 43), “and shall run to and fro like sparks among the reeds” (Wis. iii. 7); “they shall become like the angels of God” (St. Matt. xxii. 30); “they shall be inebriated with the plenty of God’s house, and shall drink of the torrent of His pleasure” (Ps. xxxv. 9). “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered

into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love Him" (1 Cor. ii. 9).

But though all the saints are supremely happy, there are various degrees in their bliss, corresponding to the various degrees of merit which they have acquired in this life. Not only will those who have acquired higher merit be crowned with greater honour and glory, but this glory will be different according to the special and peculiar virtues which they have practised. Three classes of the saints in particular will be distinguished with a characteristic lustre,—the Martyrs, the Doctors, and the Virgins. As our Blessed Saviour carried with Him the marks of His wounds in His glorified body when He ascended into heaven, so will the Martyrs bear with them the traces of their sufferings and the purple garments dyed in their blood. A special glory is promised to the Doctors by the prophet Daniel (xii. 3): "They that are learned shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that instruct many to justice, as stars for all eternity." Of the Virgins we are told: "they follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, and sing a new canticle which no other can sing" (Apoc. xiv.). But such is the union and charity which reigns among the blessed, that the special privileges which some enjoy, and the inequality of their glory, so far from being a subject of envy, become to them a fresh cause of joy. For they so rejoice in each other's happiness, and in the glory which it gives to God, that the bliss they all enjoy becomes in a certain sense the possession of each one in particular.

But the one crowning joy of heaven consists in the sight and possession of God Himself for all eternity. "Fear not, I am thy protector, and thy reward exceeding great" (Gen. xv. 1). "This is eternal life, to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent" (St. John xvii. 3). Whatever pleasure or whatever happiness we can possibly derive from all created goods, would be but so many sparks which flow from the Divine bounty. In possessing God we possess the source of all good, of all blessings, of all happiness,—the concentration and perfection of the innumerable manifestations of beauty

and loveliness which adorn His creatures. Clothed with the light of glory, the blessed will so rejoice in God, and will be so closely united to Him, that they will seem transformed into the Divine nature: "We shall be like to Him," says St. John, "because we shall see Him as He is" (1 St. John iii. 2). "They will be like God, not simply because they are created after His image, but like Him in His glory, His beauty, and His happiness. Just as iron when heated seems to lose its own properties and to become fire, so the blessed, inflamed with the fire of Divine love, will become like God.

If the justice of God leads Him to reward His faithful servants with such incomparable glory, this same justice shows itself with terrible rigour in the punishment of the wicked. They are for ever shut out from the light of the Divine countenance, and weighed down in their prison of fire by the heavy curse which will for ever press upon them. They are deprived of all joy and all hope, and plunged into a sea of misery; they are cast forth into utter darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth, and where no order, but everlasting horror, reigns. They are tormented in fire, and cannot so much as obtain one drop of water to cool the tip of the tongue. So terrible is the state of the lost souls, that we cannot understand the least part of it; but the almighty power of God and His avenging justice will search out the exact kind and amount of each one's guilt, and will proportion every one's punishment to his crimes. And these torments will not merely endure for ever, but such is the nature of eternity, that all its joys and all its sufferings are accumulated into one point; so that the wicked will always have to endure, at one and the same instant, all the multiplied misery which will arise from the intensity and the duration of their sufferings.

We who live upon earth are placed between these two eternities; we stand as it were on a narrow bridge, with heaven on one side and hell on the other. At present we have it in our power to choose between the two. By persevering in a good and virtuous life we are choosing heaven, by freely consenting to sin we are choosing hell.

PART II.

ON CHARITY AND THE COMMANDMENTS.

CHAP. XXXIX. The Necessity and Nature of Charity.

IT has been shown how necessary faith is for salvation; and we have considered the things we have to believe as they are contained in the Apostles' Creed. But faith alone, as the Catechism says, will not save us. Besides believing in God, and being united to Him by the understanding, we must love Him and faithfully keep His commandments, in other words, we must be united to Him by the affections and will. St. Paul says, "Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing" (1 Cor. xiii. 2). And St. James declares that faith is perfected by works, that "as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead" (St. James ii. 26). We read in the Gospels of a young man who came and asked our Blessed Lord what he should do to have eternal life. Our Lord answered: "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments" (St. Matt. xix. 17); and the first and greatest commandment, He tells us in another place, is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, with thy whole soul, with thy whole mind, and with thy whole strength; and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." It is plain, then, that charity and obedience are necessary to salvation, and come next in order to be explained.

In some respects there is the same connexion between charity and the commandments as between faith and the Creed. We exercise our faith by believing the articles of the Creed, so we exercise charity by keeping the commandments. But there is this difference, that whereas the articles of the Creed can be and are the object-matter of

faith, and faith only, the commandments may be and are the object-matter of other virtues besides charity. A person may be chaste, honest, obedient to those set over him, gentle, guarded in his language, and so keep the sixth, seventh, fifth, fourth, and second commandments, and yet be without charity. Such observance of the commandments, it is true, will profit nothing, so far as the salvation of the soul is concerned (1 Cor. viii. 9); neither can we keep the law as a whole without charity,—for he who offends in one part becomes guilty of all (St. James ii. 10), the ultimate authority of the law being one and the same in all;—yet looking at the commandments as so many distinct precepts, plainly we may keep some while we break others. So that charity is not necessary for the observance of the commandments in the same sense that faith is necessary for accepting the articles of the Creed.

Charity is connected with the commandments: 1. As their end. The end of the commandment is charity (1 Tim. i. 5); for the end and purpose of all the commandments is to unite us to God, and charity alone does this. 2. As their uniting principle. All the commandments aim at charity and are subordinated to it; they are as it were bound together by it, and so charity becomes “the bond of perfection” (Col. iii. 14). 3. As implying their observance, and as showing itself therein. When we love a person, we try to please him; and if we love God, we shall do what He tells us, and conform ourselves to His will: “If ye love Me, keep My commandments” (St. John xiv. 15): “The love of our neighbour worketh no evil, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law” (Rom. xiii. 10). In this way other virtues spring out of charity, are included under it, and are by it brought into action. Thus, “charity is patient, is kind: charity envieth not, dealeth not perversely, is not puffed up. Is not ambitious, seeketh not her own, is not provoked to anger, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things” (1 Cor. xiii. 4-7).

We see, then, how charity stands at the head of all other virtues,—how it is their beginning and end,—how it

commands them all, embraces them all, directs them all to God,—gives them all their meaning,—is the source of all their merit in the supernatural order,—is not only most necessary, but is by itself sufficient for salvation. Salvation, says a great spiritual writer is shown to faith, prepared for hope, but given to charity. The word ‘charity’ is used in Holy Scripture of God Himself. “God,” says St. John, “is charity” (1 St. John iv. 8). Again, it is attributed in a special manner to the third Person of the Blessed Trinity, who is the Love of the Father and the Son, and the immediate efficient cause of love in us. As a condition of our souls (and under this meaning it is to be treated of here), it is “that supernatural habit whereby we love God above all things for His own sake, because, as such, He infinitely deserves our love, and our neighbour for the love of God.”

1. It is a supernatural gift. It is not within the scope of our natural powers, neither can we do any thing to deserve it. It is bestowed on us without any merit on our part, by the mercy of God, through the merits of Jesus Christ. “In this is charity,” says St. John, “not as though we had loved God, but because He hath first loved us, and sent His Son to be a propitiation for our sins” (1 St. John iv. 10); that is, the love of God in Christ is the source and fountain of our love to Him. And St. Paul says, “The charity of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which He has given unto us” (Rom. iv. 5).

2. By it we love God above all things *for His own sake*. Its object is God considered as supremely good, infinitely loveable in Himself. We may love a person for two reasons, either because we appreciate his excellence in itself, or because we have received, or expect to receive, some advantage from him. So we may love God, either because, when we think of His perfections, we perceive that He is beyond all other beings worthy of love; or we may love Him for what He has done or will do for us,—because He has created us, preserved us, redeemed us, sanctified us, bestowed on us countless blessings, temporal and spiritual,—because in Him alone is our happiness, and without Him we must be eternally

miserable. When we love God in the former manner, we are said to love Him with the love of benevolence or friendship; when in the latter, with the love of concupiscence or gratitude. The love of benevolence and friendship alone is the love of charity; the love of concupiscence and gratitude belongs rather to hope,—is altogether of a lower order,—is interested, and seeks not so much the giver as his gifts. We must not, however, suppose from this that such love is in any sense reprehensible; for although it arises out of self-interest, it does not put self before God, but, by acknowledging all happiness to be in God, it virtually subordinates self to God. It is imperfect and insufficient because it does not love God more than self, and therefore cannot claim to belong to charity, which seeketh not her own, and loves God above all things. Neither is such love incompatible with the love of charity; for although *an act* of charity excludes self as having God alone for its object, yet since charity and hope, *as habits*, coexist, and must coexist by the very constitution of our nature, self-interest will, in a measure, be found even in the purest states of self-abnegation.

The object, then, of charity is God for His own sake. It loves God because He is infinitely just, infinitely true, infinitely merciful, infinitely beautiful, infinitely wise, in a word, infinitely good; and, on that account, wishes that His name may be glorified in this world and the next,—by the saints in heaven, by men on earth, and even by the lost in hell,—and detests whatever is displeasing to Him or contrary to His holy will.

3. Again, the love of charity must be sovereign, above all other loves. Our Lord says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, with thy whole mind, with thy whole soul, with thy whole strength." We may look at these words in their substance as a commandment, and in their fulness as a counsel. (1) As a commandment binding under pain of mortal sin, they mean that we must so prefer God to all other things, ourselves included, as to be ready to sacrifice every thing most dear to us,—even our own lives,—to submit to any

suffering rather than forfeit His friendship. (2) As a commandment binding under pain of venial sin, they mean that we must so love God as to leave no affection unconsecrated to Him. It does not mean that we are to love nothing but God, but that we are to love nothing apart from God, to have no affection which we cannot refer to God. (3) Again, we may take these words, *with all thy strength*, as a counsel recommending us in all things to choose that which we believe most pleasing to God.

It is to be observed that the love of charity is a practical love; it lies in the deliberate choice of the will. It is not, on the one hand, a mere matter of feeling,—a tender emotion of the sensitive appetite; we may experience such in a far greater degree for our parents, our friends, than for God, and so love them *more intensely* than God, and yet not sin against charity; for so long as we are prepared to give them up, if God required it, we do not really prefer them to Him. Nor is it, on the other hand, a mere judgment of the understanding that God is the sovereign good, before all things worthy of our love. No one who believes in God at all, in his right senses, could doubt this; yet atheism is not the only sin opposed to charity. The love of charity is a love of preference. It is in the will which deliberately chooses God before all things, and is determined to sacrifice all rather than offend Him. Such being the nature of charity, we see at once that it cannot stand with mortal sin; the two are contrary the one to the other. The one consists in turning to God, the other in turning away from Him. The one puts God before all things, the other puts the creature in the first place. The one seeks all its happiness in God, the other in self: “Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not; and whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him nor known Him” (1 St. John iii. 6). “Every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God” (1 St. John iv. 7). “Whosoever is born of God, committeth not sin: he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil” (1 St. John iii. 9, 10). “We know that we have passed from death unto

life because we love the brethren. He that loveth not abideth in death" (1 St. John v. 14).

On the other hand, any act of charity, however feeble, puts us in a state of grace, and our growth in charity is commensurate with our growth in grace. As long as we live we may go on growing in grace. So we may increase in charity. The habit becomes more and more deeply rooted in the soul, possesses it more, influences it more, rules over it more and more completely till the last moment of our life. But charity cannot be gradually lessened. Mortal sin, as was said, destroys it at once; venial sin does not, it would seem, directly affect it; if it did, a number of venial sins would amount to a mortal sin, which we know is not the case. Nevertheless charity is impeded in its exercise by venial sin, in that the sinful affection cannot be referred to God; and this is what spiritual writers mean when they say that venial sin diminishes the fervour of charity. Again, as venial sin leads to mortal sin by fostering bad habits and depriving us of special graces, indirectly it may cause us to lose charity.

As charity ever accompanies sanctifying grace,* all the means of grace are means of charity,—prayer, the Sacraments, good works, deeds of penance done in a state of

* Many great theologians suppose that charity and sanctifying grace are one and the same thing; that charity is sanctifying grace, and sanctifying grace charity. For, as they remark, all the effects and characteristics of the former are attributed in Holy Scripture to the latter. 1. By grace we become the sons of God; and St. John says of charity, "Whosoever loveth is born of God" (1 Ep. 4). 2. By grace we are made pleasing in the sight of God; and so of charity it is said, "He who loveth Me, shall be loved of My Father." 3. Grace bestows spiritual life, and so does charity: "We know that we are translated from death unto life because we love the brethren; he who loveth not abideth in death." 4. Grace unites us to God; and "He who abideth in charity abideth in God, and God in him" (1 St. John iv.). 5. Grace is the principle of merit, and St. Paul refers all the virtues to charity: "Charity is patient," &c. (1 Cor. xiii.). 6. Grace is the ground of our salvation, the seed of our future glory; and this is the very effect which St. James attributes to charity: "God hath promised a crown of life to those that love Him." 7. Sins are remitted by grace; and our Lord says of St. Mary Magdalen, "Her sins which are many are forgiven, for she hath loved much."

grace, acts of charity, even the most feeble. And the better to make acts of this virtue, we should accustom ourselves to meditate upon God, His Being and His attributes, His deeds of mercy and love, regarded not so much as benefits to us, but rather as manifestations of His nature. We should think about Him as He has made Himself easy to be thought about,—incarnate in Jesus Christ our Lord. The will cannot act except through the understanding; we cannot love a person unless we know him, and it is not easy to see how we can know God unless we meditate upon His character, what He is, and what He does.

CHAP. XL. How often we are bound to make acts of charity.

WE are bound to elicit an act of charity, (1) whenever we have any obligation which implies such an act. For instance, if we were in danger of dying without the Sacraments in a state of sin, we should be bound to make an act of perfect contrition, which presupposes an act of charity. (2) If, again, we were under a temptation which could not be conquered without an act of charity. (3) It is probable we are bound to make an act of charity at the beginning of our rational existence, when we are first able to appreciate the goodness of God. (4) And it is still more likely that we are so bound in the hour of death; for it does not seem consistent with the care we ought to have for our souls to neglect so great a means of salvation at such a time. (5) And frequently during our lifetime we are bound to make acts of charity, though it is not possible to fix precisely how often. St. Alphonsus says we should commit a mortal sin if we neglected for a month to make an act of charity. Indeed, if we wish to keep the commandments, if we wish to keep alive in us that virtue without which we are nothing, we shall never let a day pass without frequently making acts of love to God; and such acts need not be made in a set form of words. Whenever we say the Lord's Prayer, and sincerely wish that God's name may be hallowed for the love we bear Him, we make an act of perfect charity. Nor do we require words at all.

We may elicit acts of charity by giving alms, by hearing Mass, or doing any good work for the love of God.

CHAP. XLI. On the virtue of Charity as exercised towards our neighbour.

AFTER our Lord had laid down the first and great commandment of the law, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," &c., He added, "and the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." We must not, however, suppose that these two precepts belong to two distinct virtues. They are both included under the one virtue of charity, for the motive of love in both cases is the same. When we love God by charity, we love Him, as we have seen, for His own sake; when we love our neighbour by charity, we love him for the sake of God. Hence the observance of one precept implies the observance of the other. He who loveth God must love his brother also (1 John iv. 21); and "if any man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar" (iv. 20). Our love for God necessarily passes on to all who participate in His goodness; and if we love not so much of Himself as God has shown us in those who bear His image and likeness, we thereby prove that we do not love God. "He that loveth not his brother, whom he seeth, how can he love God whom he seeth not?" It is fitting therefore to speak of the love of our neighbour under the virtue of charity.

And first, who is our neighbour? When our Lord was asked this question, He replied in a parable, which teaches us that every man, no matter how separated from us by religion or social position, is our neighbour, and to be assisted in time of need. Our neighbour, then, includes the whole human race; not only our relations and friends, fellow-countrymen and benefactors, not only those of the household of faith, but the whole human race,—strangers, pagans, infidels, heretics, Jews as well as Catholics; the bad as well as the good; our enemies as well as our friends; those who hate us and do us harm, as well as those who love us and do us good.

1. All men are our neighbours and deserve our love; for

all men are our brethren of the same flesh and blood: "God hath made of one all mankind to dwell upon the face of the earth" (Acts xvii. 26). And the voice of nature as well as revelation cries out against brethren quarrelling, and that it is good that they should dwell together in unity (Ps. cxxxii. 1).

2. All men have been redeemed in the precious Blood of Jesus Christ. There is no one for whom Christ did not die; none whom God does not sincerely wish to save. But if God wishes eternal happiness for every man, we ought to do so too. This is St. Paul's argument: "I desire, therefore, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made by men. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one Mediator of God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a redemption for all" (1 Tim. ii. 1-6).

3. It is in a special sense the precept of the Gospel. "A new commandment I give unto you: that ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye also love one another" (St. John xiii. 34). "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you" (xv. 12). And that our Lord included in this love all mankind, enemies as well as friends, is clear from His own words in the Sermon on the Mount: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thy enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, do good to those that hate you, and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you; that ye may be the children of your Father who is in heaven, who maketh His sun to rise on the good and the bad, and raineth upon the just and unjust" (Matt. v. 43-45).

Tradition tells us how the Apostle of love, St. John, in his extreme old age, used to be carried to the church at Ephesus, and preach nothing but, "Little children, love one another;" and when some, weary with hearing the same thing so often, asked him why he did so, he said, "It is the Lord's commandment, and he who fulfils it has done all he need."

We are not only commanded to love all mankind as our neighbour, but we are admonished how we should love them: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." We are not to understand from these words that we are to love our neighbour as much as ourselves. When our Lord says, "Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect," He does not mean that our perfection is to equal in degree the perfection of God,—for He does not command impossibilities,—but that we are to take the goodness and mercy of God as our standard of excellence, as the example and type according to which we should shape our conduct. So here, when we are commanded to love our neighbour as ourselves, it is meant that our love for ourselves is to be the example of our love to others: in *the same manner* as we love ourselves we are to love our neighbours.

It is, then, our duty first to love ourselves. No doubt at first hearing such a statement will sound strange, and contrary to the doctrine of spiritual writers, who denounce self-love as the source of all sin,—an enemy to be fought against and repressed,—rather than a virtue to be aimed at and encouraged. Yet there is no real contradiction. For the self-love of charity is a very different thing from the self-love against which spiritual writers inveigh; the latter is that disposition in us which leads us to prefer our own pleasure to the will of God,—that inordinate appreciation of self which makes us think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think, and neglect the duties we owe others,—which causes us to put ourselves in the first place, as the ultimate end of all we do and think and say. And this is indeed the root of all sin. But the self-love of charity is the desire for our eternal happiness; not simply for our own sake,—otherwise it would not be the love of charity,—but because God, who is infinitely good, wills our sanctification and glory; and this is the perfection of love. We begin with loving God for the sake of self, and we end with loving self for the sake of God.

We are most certainly bound to love ourselves with the love of charity more than any one else; for to each one has been committed in a special manner the guardianship of his own soul. And he would not be justified in

abandoning such a trust even to save the world. "Every one of us shall render account to God for himself," says the Apostle (Rom. xiv. 12); therefore for himself must each one first have regard, and must not let any other person's salvation, however dear, stand in the way of his own.

Again, we are bound not only to love our souls, but our bodies, with the love of charity. For God has prepared a supernatural glory for the body as well as the soul. Of our body we are told that, "it is sown in corruption, it shall rise in incorruption. It is sown in dishonour, it shall rise in glory. It is sown in weakness, it shall rise in power. It is sown a natural body, it shall rise a spiritual body" (1 Cor. xv. 42-44). This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. "Our Lord Jesus Christ will reform the body of our lowliness, made like to the body of His glory, according to the operation whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself" (Phil. iii. 21). And to love the body with the love of charity, is to wish it all this for the sake of God, who wills it so to be. We see how the mortifications of the flesh enjoined by the Gospel, and practised in so eminent a degree by the saints, consist with such love, may result from it: "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life for My sake and the Gospel's shall save it" (St. Mark viii. 35). From what has been said about the kind of love we should have for ourselves, we can gather in what the love of our neighbour consists. As we ought to desire and endeavour to procure for ourselves salvation and the means thereto, so we ought to do for all mankind; not indeed for all alike, but in proportion as some are more nearly connected with us than others, or have special claims on our affection. Thus, we should love parents, a husband or wife, a brother or sister, before all other relations; believers and Catholics before infidels and heretics; friends and benefactors before enemies.

Upon the love of our enemies we have a distinct precept laid down by our Blessed Lord, which has been already referred to, and of which it will be in place here to give

some explanation. "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thy enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you" (St. Matt. v. 43, 44). In these words our Lord clearly tells us that we are bound to love our enemies in the same manner as men used to say we should love our friends, that is, with a real love. It is not, then, sufficient to show external signs of love. There have been casuists who have said as much, but such an opinion was condemned by the Church. Love is of the heart and will, and not of the outward conduct. If we are ever so civil in our manner and words towards our neighbour, yet cherish within us a feeling of hatred towards him, most assuredly we cannot be said to love him. Nor, again, is it enough to have no ill-will towards our enemy; for love is not merely an absence of hatred, it is in itself a something positive, and in the present case implies a sincere wish for our enemies' welfare, for the sake of God. We are not indeed bound to have the same feeling of personal liking for our enemies as for our friends; neither need we treat them with special marks of affection; but we are bound to deal with them as fellow-men, created and redeemed by the same God, and heirs of the same hope.

We sin, then, against our Lord's command when we entertain dislike, malice, hatred, and desire of revenge, —when we rejoice at our enemy's discomfiture, or are sorry at his success, —when we will not forgive him, or prevent a reconciliation, —when we refuse him help in time of need, which we might and would supply were he not an enemy, —when we will not pray for him, or have any dealings with him in the common business of life. In all such ways we may easily fall into grievous sin, and prepare for ourselves certain condemnation: "For if ye will not forgive men, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive you your offences" (St. Matt. vi. 15). "And with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged, and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again" (vii. 2).

CHAP. XLII. On the spiritual and corporal Works of Mercy.

CHARITY, as it tends to the relief of soul and body, will show itself in what are called the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. The former are: 1. To convert the sinner; 2. To instruct the ignorant; 3. To counsel the doubtful; 4. To comfort the sorrowful; 5. To bear wrongs patiently; 6. To forgive injuries; 7. To pray for the living and the dead.

The latter are: 1. To feed the hungry; 2. To give drink to the thirsty; 3. To clothe the naked; 4. To harbour the harbourless; 5. To visit the sick; 6. To visit the imprisoned; 7. To bury the dead.

It will be unnecessary to speak of these works of mercy in detail. We may estimate their overwhelming importance by this consideration alone,—that our Lord Jesus Christ brings forward the performance or neglect of them as the ground of our acceptance or rejection at the last day. The corporal deeds of mercy are mentioned by name, the spiritual are implied.

“When the Son of man shall come in His majesty; and all the angels with Him, then shall He sit on the seat of His majesty; and all nations shall be gathered together before Him, and He shall separate them from one another, even as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats; and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on his left. Then shall the king say to them that shall be on His right hand, Come ye blessed of My Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and ye gave Me to eat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me to drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in: naked, and ye covered Me: sick, and ye visited Me: I was in prison, and ye came to Me. Then shall the just answer Him, saying, Lord, when did we see Thee hungry, and fed Thee; thirsty, and gave Thee drink; and when did we see Thee a stranger, and took Thee in; or naked, and covered Thee; or when did we see Thee sick, or in prison, and came to Thee? And the King answering, shall say to

them, Amen I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these My least brethren, you did it to Me."

"Then shall He say to them also that shall be on His left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry, and ye gave Me not to eat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me not to drink. I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in: naked, and ye covered Me not: sick and in prison, and ye did not visit Me. Then they also shall answer Him, saying: Lord, when did we see Thee hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister to Thee? Then shall He answer them, saying, Amen I say to you, as long as ye did it not to one of these least, neither did ye do it to Me. And these shall go into everlasting punishment: but the just into life everlasting" (St. Matt. xxv. 31-46).

Before concluding the subject of charity, it remains to say a few words upon almsgiving and fraternal correction. Alms in its widest signification would include any work of mercy, spiritual or corporal,—any help we can render our neighbour; but, in its narrower and more usual sense, it means only that succour which we supply out of our worldly goods. It is in this last sense that it is here spoken of.

It is a bounden duty for all who have it in their power to give alms. Holy Scripture does not permit us to doubt this for a moment.

"He that hath the substance of this world, and shall see his brother in need, and shall shut up his bowels from him: how doth the charity of God abide in him?" (1 John iii. 17). God threatens those who neglect this duty, whereas those who fulfil it He promises abundantly to reward.

"Son, defraud not the poor of alms, and turn not away thy eyes from the poor. For the prayer of him that curseth thee in the bitterness of his soul shall be heard: for He that made him will hear him" (Eccl. iv. 1, 6).

"Help the poor because of the commandment, send him not away empty because of his poverty" (xxix. 12).

"Shut up alms in the heart of the poor, and it shall obtain help for thee against all evil" (v. 15).

"There shall not be wanting poor in the land of thy habitation, therefore I command thee to open thy hand to thy poor and needy brother" (Deut. xv. 11).

"Give alms out of thy substance, and turn not away thy face from any poor man, for so it shall come to pass that the face of the Lord shall not be turned away from thee. According to thy ability, be merciful; if thou hast much, give abundantly; if thou hast little, take care even so to bestow willingly a little. For thus thou storest up to thyself a good reward for the day of necessity. For alms deliver from all sin and from death, and will not suffer the soul to go into darkness. Alms shall be a great confidence before the most high God" (Tob. iv. 7-12).

"Give alms; and behold all things are clean unto you" (St. Luke xi. 41).

The extent of the duty is determined by the urgency of the distressed case. Where a person would die unless immediately relieved, we should be bound to give even to the extent of depriving ourselves of all but the bare necessities of life. In a less urgent but pressing case, we are bound to retrench more or less upon our comforts. In ordinary cases of poverty, we should give that which remains after reserving to ourselves a sufficiency for our state of life.

Certain dispositions must accompany almsgiving in order to make it meritorious in the sight of God. We must give humbly without ostentation, for God and not for man.

"When thou dost an almsdeed, sound not a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be honoured by men. Amen I say unto you, they have received their reward. But when thou dost an alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth. That thy alms may be in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret will repay thee" (St. Matt. vi. 2-4). We must give justly, taking care that what we give is our own. We are bidden, too, to give cheerfully; "not with sadness or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. ix. 7).

Fraternal Correction. Fraternal correction is reproof administered to our brother with a view to his spiritual

advantage. Superiors are bound in justice to rebuke the faults of those committed to their care; and charity, as it bids each to desire and practically seek his brother's welfare, makes it incumbent on each to admonish a brother, when by so doing there is reason to think it will prevent an injury to his soul.

Nevertheless, in practising this duty, great circumspection is required. (1) We must see that we are really actuated by a spirit of charity; that our aim is our brother's good, and not the gratification of any bad feeling, dislike, jealousy, or pride. (2) We must exercise great prudence in the mode of administering the reproof. We must speak with humility and gentleness. The character of the person must be taken into account. We should not rebuke in the same manner an equal or inferior, and one much older than ourselves, or occupying a higher position. Indeed, we can only be called on in very extraordinary cases to rebuke those above us. We must choose our time and place discreetly, so as to avoid scandal, needlessly provoking our neighbour, or damaging his reputation.

We are dispensed from the duty of fraternal correction:

1. Whenever we are not sure of the fault. In such a case we should be more likely to do harm by misjudgment, than good by admonition.

2. When we have reason to think that our reproof will produce no amendment; and this is often the case. There are a number of persons who, the more they are spoken to, the more they sin; who are provoked to sin by the very fact of being told of their faults.

3. Again, we are not bound to reprove our neighbour when our own safety or well-being would be imperilled to any great extent. It would be a very noble and meritorious act to assist our neighbour in such a case; but charity does not ordinarily require it of us under pain of sin.

CHAP. XLIII. On the Commandments in general.

HAVING spoken of charity, the next thing to speak of is the Commandments. For the means by which charity is

shown is in keeping the Commandments. Our Lord Himself makes it the proof of charity: "If you love Me," He says, "keep My commandments" (St. John xiv. 15); and just after He says again: "He who has My commands, and observes them, he it is who loves Me." Charity is to be the motive which influences us; and it is to influence us, not only inwardly, but in our outward actions. So St. John says, "Let us not love in word nor in tongue, but in deed and in truth" (1 St. John iii. 18). And the reason of this is clear: for what can be more acceptable to any one than to do His will. Now what we mean by the law of God is the expression of His will as the rule of our conduct. The Ten Commandments are frequently called the Decalogue, from two Greek words meaning 'ten words,' because they are the ten words which God spoke to man expressing His will. We are taught in the first page of the Catechism that the end for which God made us was to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him. How do we serve Him but by submitting our will to His, and by observing those laws and commandments which He has given us?

The History of the Ten Commandments. They were given, as the Catechism says, by God Himself in the Old Law. The circumstances were these. In the beginning of the third month after the children of Israel left Egypt, they removed their encampment from Raphidim, and pitched their tents in the wilderness of Sinai, over against the mountain. Moses was called by God to go up the mountain, and was there instructed to prepare the people for receiving the Law. They were to sanctify themselves and wash their garments, and certain limits were set round the mountain beyond which no one, either man or beast, was to approach, or he would suffer instant death. After they had prepared themselves for three days, on the morning of the third, "behold thunders began to be heard and lightning to flash, and a very thick cloud to cover the mount, and the noise of the trumpet sounded exceeding loud, and the people that was in the camp feared." Afterwards "the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder," and all Mount Sinai was on a smoke, because the

Lord was come down upon it in fire; "and all the mount was terrible." Then it was that God spoke to the people the Ten Commandments. "And all the people," it is said, "saw the voices and the flames, and the sound of the trumpet, and the mount smoking; and, being terrified and struck with fear, they stood afar off, saying to Moses, Speak thou to us, and we will hear. Let not the Lord speak to us, lest we die" (Exod. xx.). Moses then entered into the cloud, and there received from God the whole Jewish Law in detail, and likewise the two stone Tables of Testimony written with the finger of God. These two tables were, indeed, broken by Moses, who let them fall from his hands when, on coming down from the mountain, he beheld the people worshipping the golden calf. But God desired him to hew two other tablets of stone, and to write on them all that was written on the first. Moses did so, and afterwards placed them in the Ark of the Covenant, where they continued to be kept; and hence the Ark of the Covenant obtained its name. For the commandments were, by God's desire, to be regarded by the people as the conditions of that covenant, or agreement, which He made with His own chosen people, that "they should be His people, and He should be their God." Accordingly, as St. Paul (Heb. ix.) reminds us, this covenant was ratified with blood, which Moses took, and sprinkled with it the Book of the Law, and all the people, saying, "This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you" (Heb. ix. 20).

Distribution and division of the Commandments.

But though the Commandments are given us in Holy Scripture, they are not given to us divided as we now have them, nor indeed divided at all. Hence it has come to pass that two different methods of dividing them have prevailed. Amongst the Jews that arrangement was followed which Protestants have adopted. According to this, the first commandment is divided into two parts, and the ninth and tenth, as forbidding coveting of any description, are thrown together. This distribution is to be found in some of the Fathers. But the present arrangement, which was followed by St. Augustine and others, is up-

held by the Church as the most natural, the sense seeming to require it; since, as St. Thomas argues, the second part of the first commandment is comprised under the prohibition of having no other gods but God. But the ninth commandment, not to covet our neighbour's wife, forbids one particular species of coveting; and to covet our neighbour's goods is another altogether different species of coveting, and not contained under the first.

We may classify the Commandments in two or three different ways. First, as they prohibit sins of thought, word, or action; or again, according as the vices they forbid may be classed under one or another of the seven capital sins; or again, as they are commands or prohibitions. But the most useful and ordinary division is into the first and second tables, the first comprising, in three commands, our duty to God, and the second, in seven, our duty to our neighbour. We may, moreover, observe that they have a regular order of succession, according to the importance of the matter. The first commandment of the first table enjoins the paramount duty of acknowledging and honouring God as God, and letting no person or thing take that which belongs to Him. Next, in the second, comes the duty of not acting with irreverence to any thing belonging to God, or called after Him. And in the third we are reminded of the duty of upholding the external worship of God by means of religious observances, as the Sabbath.

In the second table, containing our duty to our neighbour, we come first to that class of duties which we owe to our parents and other superiors. As they are the natural authors of our being, and the representatives of God, our highest duties, next to God, are to them; and so we are to honour and obey them, whenever our doing so does not clash with the higher duty we owe to God. Then, as to our neighbours in general or the world at large, our first duty to them is not to injure them in their life, either natural or spiritual (fifth commandment); secondly, not to do an injury to our neighbour in that which, next to life, is most valuable, namely, the honour and chastity of his family (sixth commandment); thirdly, not to injure him

in his property, which is next in order of importance; and fourthly, not to injure him in his character. Last in order, we come to a class of sins which may exist in our minds, without having gone as yet far enough to injure our neighbour,—though tending towards it,—but far enough to injure ourselves. We have the ninth commandment forbidding inordinate desires of the flesh, and the tenth, inordinate desires of others' goods and profits.

It may be observed that, in general, the Commandments forbid by name the greatest sin of each kind, and by implication lesser sins of the same species, as well as those acts and occasions which lead up to that sin.

CHAP. XLIV. Of the Obligations of the Commandments.

HERE there comes in an important question for consideration,—How far and why we are bound by these commandments? For since they were given to the children of Israel, and formed part of the old law, what have we to do with them, we “who are not under the law, but under grace” (Rom. vi. 14). For Christ came to make the new covenant with man that was prophesied of by Jeremias (ch. xxxi.), and to establish that new law which St. Paul teaches us was to differ from the old law, because it was to be written not on tables of stone, but on the fleshly tables of the heart (Heb. viii. 10).

To understand the explanation of this question, we must recollect that the Jewish law consisted of three different parts,—the moral law; the ceremonial, and the political or judicial. Each part was given by God, and each part was to fulfil its own end. Our Lord, in establishing the Christian Church, did not come to repeal or to destroy the old law, but to fulfil it (St. Matt. v. 17). But each part was to be fulfilled in that way which its nature required. The political or judicial part regarded the present state of the Israelites in their passage through the Desert, and their settlement in the promised land. This part of the law had been fulfilled while the Jewish people were under their own government; but now that the sceptre had passed from Judah, because the Messiah was

come, its fulfilment was completed, and so it passed away. Though indeed this too was in a measure typical of the Christian Church, inasmuch as the temporal government of God's chosen people foreshadowed the government of Christ's kingdom upon earth, and the temporal rewards and punishments which hold so prominent a place in the Mosaic dispensation adumbrated the eternal ones which are put before Christians (Matt. v. 21).

The second part of the law was the ceremonial. Now the very nature and end of this part was to be "a shadow of good things to come" (Heb. x. 1). There could, therefore, be no more complete way in which this part of the law could be fulfilled than by the coming of those things that were foreshadowed. St. Paul, speaking of the law, says that it was our pedagogue, to bring us to Christ (Gal. iii. 24), and teaches us that, having done this, it has fulfilled the work in God's scheme for which it was ordained. And so our Lord said that He had come to fulfil the law, there being no other way in which this part of the law could be fulfilled, than by the giving of those spiritual blessings which were typified by the ceremonies of the law.

But while these two parts of the law have passed away, because they have been fulfilled, the moral law still remains. For while some things are only wrong because they are forbidden, and so long as they are forbidden, other things, on the contrary, are forbidden because they are in their own nature wrong. Now as the moral law consists of rules respecting what is in itself right and wrong, it could not, like the other parts, have a temporary object, which it was to fulfil and then pass away. And so our Lord came to fulfil this part, by explaining its meaning, by teaching men how it was to be kept, and giving them grace to keep it in its fulness, in a way that before, and by their own strength, they could not do. This part, then, having no temporary object to fulfil, but consisting in obedience to a law that is as eternal as God, was not merely given by God in the old law, but Christ confirmed it in the new law. Yet it is not because it was part of the old law that Christ confirmed it, or that we have to observe it, but because it is part of the eternal law, and is equivalent to what is called the natural law.

CHAP. XLV. On the Law of God.

AND here will be the place to explain what is meant precisely by the Law of God. The word 'Law' means a rule by which human actions are to be measured. As every thing is made for some end, so God in making man made him for a particular end. He gave him a nature fitted for that end. And that design of God, made known to man, became the rule or measure of man's actions, or the law which he was under. It is called 'Eternal' because it proceeds from the very nature of God, and is therefore unalterable. God being infinitely good in Himself, could not but have made man for goodness, and laid it on him as a command. This command or law, as proceeding from the very nature of God, is that which makes the eternal difference between right and wrong, and can never alter or be done away with.

Now this law of right and wrong, which is thus based upon the nature of God, and is therefore eternal, may be made known to us by direct revelation, or by our seeing it imprinted on the constitution of the world. And so far as it is discoverable by us in the very nature of things, it is called the natural law. For as all animals possess the faculty of sight, so God has given to every man the power of reason, sometimes called the light of nature, by which he is able to discover what he was designed for. Thus it is that no man is left in utter ignorance of God and His will. Man can obtain from his own reason some insight into God's will. 'God has not left Himself without testimony' (Acts xiv.) even among the heathen, who, if they do not possess full light and knowledge, may yet, as St. Paul reminded the Athenians, "feel after Him, or find Him" (Acts xvii. 27). "For when the Gentiles," he says again (Rom. ii. 14, 15), "who have not the law, do by nature those things that are of the law; these not having the law, are a law unto themselves: who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness to them." This same light of nature, or participation of the eternal law in the mind of man, is referred to in the passage of the Psalms which says, "The light

of Thy countenance, O Lord, is signed upon us" (Ps. iv.). It is because we in this way possess, each of us, some light to guide us to what is right, that no man can plead entire ignorance of right and wrong. And so we find, that for the most part the obligations of the natural law are respected even in heathen countries.

Yet though this law may be discovered by the light of nature, God has never actually left the world with only the light of nature to guide it. On the contrary, He not only revealed it to the first man, from whom it was handed down to his descendants, but as it became hidden and obscured by the corruption and wickedness of mankind, He again and again renewed it. The Patriarchs had special revelations to themselves, and it was renewed to the Israelites with circumstances of special solemnity, in order to move them to the more careful observance of it. And even after this, when the Prophets were sent by God to His rebellious people, it was to renew and enforce for the most part the obligations of the moral law. So that, while it is clear that we are bound by this part of the law, it is also most certain, as the Roman Catechism says, that we are not therefore bound to obey it because it was given by Moses, but because it has been imprinted on the minds of all men, and has been confirmed and explained by Christ our Lord.

CHAP. XLVI. Of Conscience.

As it is the very notion of a law that it binds and obliges, from this it follows that when we know a law we are bound to obey it, so far as applicable to ourselves. And in order practically to enforce our obedience to His laws, God has furnished us with the power of judging in what cases it is applicable to ourselves. And this is what we mean by conscience, which is an act of our judgment, dictating in each particular case what we ought or ought not to do in order to conform ourselves to God's law.

This is the proper meaning of conscience, but it is some-

times used in other senses, and especially it is sometimes made identical with reason or the light of nature. In fact, however, it is very different; for conscience is not a rule or law, but it is the application of a rule or law to ourselves. They are easily confounded, because they are both in our own minds; but, in truth, conscience, as the word implies, is a knowledge within ourselves, or a judgment of our own based on the knowledge of an external law or rule. The law might be a bad one, and yet a man acting in conformity with it would not necessarily be acting against his conscience. We have an instance in St. Paul, who, when standing before the council, said that he had conversed with all good conscience before God until that day (Acts xxiii. 1). Yet, as he laments elsewhere, he had persecuted the Church of God; that is to say, he had been in ignorance of how evil the rule was that he was acting by, yet, believing it right, he had never contradicted it, but followed the dictates of his conscience.

And this brings us to the distinction of the different sorts of conscience. A conscience is said to be a true or right conscience when the rule or law on which it is based is a sound and good one; whereas if, through ignorance, a man is following a rule which he supposes right, though it is not so in fact, he is said to have a false or erroneous conscience. In this case a man is bound, if he has any suspicion that he is in ignorance of the right, to inform himself about it; yet so long as he has no such suspicion, and his conscience dictates to him that such a law applies to him, he must follow it. Nor will his ignorance of the truth be imputed to him if it is not his own fault; while his refusing to obey his conscience would in any case be a sin. Hence in preparing for confession we have to examine *our conscience*, since whatever was not done in accordance with it must be more or less sinful; although, had we been better instructed, we might have known that some things which we supposed were sins were not so in reality. In short, we never commit sin because we follow what our conscience dictates; but we may commit sin if in following our conscience we do not at the same time

take care that it is guided by what is really the law of God, and not merely an imagination of our own.

Besides this there is another distinction of conscience, into a doubtful and a certain conscience, and lastly, a scrupulous conscience. A doubtful conscience is one which is not clear and positive in its dictates, and which hesitates in determining what we ought to do. A certain conscience, on the other hand, is one that rests upon grounds that are to it morally certain, and which, therefore, does not hesitate in dictating our duty. Moral certainty means such a certainty as even prudent and enlightened men would think it reasonable to act upon in matters of daily life. It is the highest sort of certainty that we can obtain in matters of life and conduct. A man who has a doubtful conscience is bound to make it certain by seeking for light on the doubtful points. A scrupulous conscience is one that founds its dictates on frivolous grounds. It is something quite different from a tender or timorous conscience, as it can exist together with great laxity on important matters. It is in reality not a particular kind of conscience so much as a disease of the mind, which affects the conscience.

CHAP. XLVII.

The First Commandment. What it enjoins.

THE commandment which comes first in order is first also in importance ; for it concerns the first and highest of our duties, namely, those which relate to God. And so, to remind us of this, it begins with a preamble, "I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, and out of the house of bondage." For these words set before us the different titles under which we are bound to keep these commandments. First, because He who gives them to us is our Master, our Sovereign Lord, and so is entitled to the obedience of His servants. Secondly, because over and above this, He is God, our Creator, who made us at first, and will judge us hereafter, taking strict account of how we observe these laws. Thirdly, He has especial claims on our love and gratitude, because He is *our* God. The

word "thy" indicates the special care and love He has for His own chosen people, besides what He has for all men as His creatures; for it was one of the promises made to the Israelites of old, "they shall be My people, and I will be their God." And fourthly, the words, "who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, and the house of bondage," reminded the Israelites of the particular gratitude they owed Him as their Redeemer, who had delivered them out of the hand of their great enemy; just as they remind us of the still more "plenteous redemption" which He has worked for us, in our deliverance from sin and the devil,—a redemption of which that of the Israelites was only a type.

There are two or three ways in which this commandment has been divided. By some this prefatory part has been considered as the first part of the commandment itself, commanding us to acknowledge God as God, by paying Him the homage which is due to God alone. The words, "Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me," would thus form the second part, forbidding any thing to be put in the place of God. And the third part would regard the making of any images to be adored as God. Others divide the commandment into two parts, the one positive, *I am the Lord thy God*, and the other negative, *Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me*, &c. And a third way, which is perhaps as easy and clear an arrangement as any, is to consider the first sentence, not as a part of the commandment, but as prefatory to it. For the Commandments are not to be supposed to tell us of the existence of God; for unless we already knew God, and believed the Commandments to come from Him, we should not feel bound to obey them. This first sentence, therefore, reminds us of God and our duties to Him, and enjoins these duties by implication. The second sentence is the beginning of the actual commandment, forbidding us to let any person or thing take the place of God; and the third sentence simply explains this, by enlarging on the one particular way of breaking this command, which was the besetting sin of the Israelites, viz. that of making and adoring images. This arrangement is the one adopted in the English Catechism, in which the prefatory sentence is

printed separately, and not as a part of the commandment itself; while the third part is so plainly considered to be a mere enlargement or explanation, that in some catechisms it is left out, together with more of the same sort of explanation and enforcement which we find after the first commandment in Exodus xx. and Deut. v.*

"By the first commandment," then, as the Catechism says, "we are commanded to believe in one true and living God; to hope in Him, to love Him, and to serve Him all our days." But how is this to be got out of the words of the commandment? By implication. The first commandment does not directly tell us of God, and command us to believe in Him and serve Him; it would be illogical to do so; for we must first know God, and believe that the Commandments are His word, and that we are bound to obey them, or else they would have no claim on our attention. All this is previous to the Commandments, and so they do not directly enforce an obligation on which they themselves depend for their authority. But taking it for granted that we know God, they remind us of what the natural law teaches, that we are to "glorify Him as God" (Rom. i. 21). And thus, by implication, they remind us of the positive duties which we owe to God; and this is the first part of the commandment, or what is commanded by it.

Now the duty we owe to God is the duty of adoration. To adore, in its original meaning, signifies to pay respect or homage to any one; but when used in reference to God, it has a technical or particular sense. Here it means to pay divine honour, or that homage which is due to God alone. This homage consists of three parts, faith, hope, and charity, which are therefore called theological virtues, because we exercise them towards God. To this is added

* Protestants have formed from this an ingenious argument to support their calumnious accusation against the Catholic Church, that she permits and justifies the worship of images. They point to some of our catechisms, and observe that we leave out the second commandment, which refers to the worship of images; omitting to mention that it is they who, contrary to the Christian practice for so many centuries, have adopted that arrangement which makes it the second.

a fourth virtue, called religion, or the duty of the worship of God. And it has been thought that our Lord referred to these when, in answer to the question, what was the greatest commandment, He said that the first and greatest was to love God with all our heart, all our soul, all our mind, and all our strength. For with our mind we believe in God, with the desires of our soul we hope in Him, we love Him with our heart, and we worship Him externally with our strength, when all the outward actions of our daily lives are devoted to His service.

The theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity are explained in other places, as regards their own nature and qualities, as well as the obligation we are under of exercising them. We cannot, in the first instance, obtain them by ourselves. They are gifts or infused virtues which are given to us in baptism. But after having received from God the seeds or capacities of them, we are under an obligation of continuing to exercise them, and this obligation comes under the first commandment. At baptism a burning light is put into the hands of the sponsors, emblematic of the gift of faith which has just been lighted up in the soul of the baptised person. But the priest, in giving this burning light, reminds him through the sponsors of the obligation of "keeping" his baptism, and of keeping the Commandments of God, and of doing this with the hope of receiving the eternal reward which is there promised to him. Here we see that at the very moment when these virtues are infused into the soul, the duty of preserving and exerting them is referred to. This duty belongs to the first commandment, but for convenience it is treated of when speaking of these three virtues in their own place. It remains, then, to speak of the virtue of religion, or, as it is more commonly called, the duty of worshipping God. St. Thomas says that religion is a virtue by which we give to God that honour which is due to Him, and that not only inwardly in our mind, but externally in our words, our deeds, and our gestures. The virtue of religion, then, comprises every sort of act by which we pay to God that honour which belongs to Him. But its principal acts may be described under six heads, Adora-

tion, Prayer, Sacrifice, Vows, Oaths, and the Sanctification of Holy Days. But of these, Prayer will be spoken of in explaining the Lord's Prayer, Sacrifice will be treated of under the Holy Eucharist, Vows and Oaths form the special subject of the second commandment, and the Sanctification of Holy Days of the third; so that it remains to speak here of the first, the duty of Adoration.

Adoration, in its ordinary sense, has been already explained to mean all that homage which we owe to God as His creatures; but here it is taken in a more restricted sense, and means those acts of reverence and worship which we pay to Almighty God. For sometimes we use the word 'worship' in reference to others besides God. In its oldest meaning it simply implied, like the word adoration, that reverence or respect which any one might show to his superior, or to one whom he desired to honour. Thus it was applied to the honour paid to the Saints, and especially to that paid to the Blessed Virgin, and in its highest sense it was used in reference to God Himself. These three degrees of worship have been distinguished by three separate words. The highest kind of religious worship, which is paid to God alone, is called *Latria*, a Greek word, meaning the duty or obedience a slave owes to his lord. That worship which was paid to the Saints was described by the word *Doulia*, or "service;" while that which was paid to the Blessed Virgin, as being something higher than this, was called *Hyperdulia*, or "super-service." For it is a part of the worship that we owe to God to "praise Him in His saints" (Ps. cl.), and still more in His Blessed Mother. As we may blaspheme or dishonour God by showing disrespect to His name or any thing belonging to Him, so it is part of the homage which we owe to God to honour every thing that belongs to or is connected with Him. But that worship which we pay immediately to God Himself is called *Divine worship*, or worship of *Latria*.*

* As Protestants do not recognise any 'worship' as due to the saints as the friends of God, or to the Blessed Virgin as His Mother, they mean by that word *divine* worship, and thus infer that we give 'divine worship' to creatures. Hence, to avoid any

CHAP. XLVIII.

The First Commandment: What it forbids. Idolatry.

THUS far what is commanded by the first commandment; next we come to what it forbids. As it commands faith, hope, and charity, by implication it forbids, as has been shown, any thing contrary to these virtues. But sins against religion are some of them forbidden, not by implication only, but expressly, by reason perhaps of the great proneness of the Israelites to fall into them. Now the sins against religion are of two sorts, either by way of excess or defect. For religion not having for its object God, but the worship of God, is not a theological but a moral virtue; and all moral virtues consist in doing what is to be done, neither too much nor too little, but just what we ought. Religion, therefore, being a moral virtue, consists in worshipping God precisely as we are commanded to worship Him, neither neglecting on the one side what is enjoined, nor on the other putting our trust in what is forbidden.

The sins against religion by way of excess are sometimes described in general by the word 'superstition.' The word is then taken in its widest sense, and means worship paid to any thing that it ought not to be paid to, or in any way that is unauthorised. There are, therefore, many sorts of superstition; but they may be reduced to three heads, (1) idolatry, (2) divination, and (3) vain observation, which last is what is commonly meant by the word 'superstition.'

The word Idolatry is derived from two Greek words, *idolon*, an image, and *latría*; hence in its original meaning it signifies the worship of an idol, or image of a false god. But in a more extended sense idolatry means giving to any creature, animate or inanimate, the worship of *latría*, or that worship which is due to God alone. Hence it may be committed in two ways, either, first, by giving worship to that which is not deserving of any, as for example, to

ambiguity, it is becoming more common to use the word 'adoration' for that worship which is due to God alone.

idols or false gods, to our fellow-men, or to animals; or secondly, by giving divine worship to the Saints and Angels, or to holy things, instead of that inferior worship which properly belongs to them.

As to the first, the origin of it is not very clear; but it is mentioned in the book of Josue (chap. xxiv.) that men served strange gods in the time of Thare, the father of Abraham. And the book of Wisdom (chap. xiv.) describes how men were led into this sin from making representations of their deceased relatives, or those whom they desired to honour, and then came to attribute power and virtue to the images themselves, and to worship them with religious rites. We have also frequent mention in Scripture of men adoring the sun, the moon, and the host of heaven, and also of their sacrificing to devils. In Egypt, as we learn from profane history, animals of all sorts used to be worshiped as gods, and thus it was from their early impressions that the children of Israel derived their rooted inclination to worship idols, and especially under the form of a calf, the chief Egyptian deity. But it would be endless to enumerate the different ways in which men have fallen into this sin. There seems to have been scarcely any thing that men, in one place and time or another, have not worshiped. This would seem to show how natural, and almost necessary, it is for men to have some object of worship.

The other way in which men may be guilty of idolatry is by honouring with divine worship that which is only deserving of a lower kind of worship. It has been already explained, that our duty to God binds us to honour and reverence every thing belonging to Him,—the Blessed Virgin, the Saints, the Angels, persons and things dedicated to God, churches, images, relics, crucifixes,—these and every thing else that is related to Him. But to worship any of these with divine worship would be idolatry, since it would be giving to a creature that supreme honour which is due to God alone.

Are not Catholics then, heretics ask, guilty of the sin of idolatry in this second way, since they worship the Blessed Virgin, the Saints, the Angels,—they worship

images, crucifixes, and relics? It has been already explained, when speaking of the virtue of religion, that it is part of the homage we owe to God to honour every thing belonging to God. It is not, therefore, a sin, but a virtue, to honour the Blessed Virgin as the mother of God, the Saints as His friends, and the Angels as those who stand in His presence (Luke i. 19). The sin would be if we were to worship them with that sort of worship which properly belongs to God, and to Him only. But this is not done by any thing which the Church authorises. We are taught to pray to the Saints and Angels, and above all to the Blessed Virgin, as being near the throne of God, and having power with Him which we do not possess. Our Lord tells us that the angels of His little ones behold the face of His heavenly Father, and that there is joy among the angels of God over one sinner who does penance (St. Luke xv. 10). Again, we find in Scripture that God desired Job's friends to get Job to offer sacrifice for them, for He would accept him, but not them. But we do not offer sacrifice to the Saints, nor use expressions of devotion which imply the highest kind of worship. If we use some expressions of devotion that we also use to God, yet we know that expressions, whether in words or actions, take their meaning from the intention of the person who uses them. Protestants, for instance, kneel before their parents, and on some occasions before their sovereign, as well as before God. They use the word 'worship' in their marriage service with a different intention to that which they have when they apply it to God. So then, in the same way, there is no harm in using expressions towards the Saints which in their highest sense might be properly attributed to God only.

But is it not a sin to honour with religious worship inanimate things,—relics, crucifixes, pictures, and images? Here we must make a distinction between what is called absolute and relative worship. Absolute worship is that which we pay to persons and things themselves. There are different degrees of this sort of worship, as already explained, but relative worship is of an altogether different character; for we do not pay it any honour for its own sake, but only because of its being *related* to something

else. Now this latter is the sort of worship which is paid to relics and images. To worship them with absolute worship, "as if they had any life or sense to help us," would be a sin of idolatry; but to worship them with that inferior worship which is called 'relative,' is both natural and right. We cannot love or reverence any person without also showing a regard for what is nearly related to him. And in the same way we cannot love God without honouring and worshiping, with a relative worship, what is nearly related to Him, or what puts us in mind of Him.

It is objected that the first commandment forbids the making of any graven image. Is not, therefore, the very use of them wrong? No; for as St. Augustine observes, the commandment does not simply forbid the making of graven images, but their being made, in order to be adored or served. Those who are best acquainted with the Hebrew idiom know that this would be the natural meaning of the passage; and it is, moreover, evident that it was not forbidden to make images without reference to their being worshiped from this,—that Moses, by God's own command, made two images of cherubim, which were to stand over the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies (Exod. xxv.), and set up the brazen serpent in the desert, which was only destroyed when in after-times the children of Israel burnt incense to it (4 Kings xviii.). The object, too, of this command was to prevent the Israelites from that which would lead them away from the worship of the true God. They had not seen God, and so could not make any true similitude (Deut. iv. 15). If they made any images, it was to represent the gods of the heathen nations, and thus to lead them away from the true God. But when we make images, it is not to adore them, but only to pay them that relative honour which belongs to them, because they represent Christ or the Saints. It is for the sake of enlivening our faith and enkindling our devotion towards those whom they represent, and thus leading us to God, not away from Him. So, too, with regard to relics; it is impossible for men to have a lively faith, and not to set a value on any thing that is a memorial of our Lord, of His sufferings for us,

or of His chosen servants, and those that have shed their blood for His sake. And here, again, we find Holy Scripture supporting the doctrine of the Church. It is related in the fourth Book of Kings, that a dead man was restored to life by touching the bones of the prophet Eliseus, who had been buried in the same sepulchre. We have an instance recorded of a woman being healed of her sickness by touching the hem of our Lord's garment (St. Matt. ix. 20). And in the Acts (chap. xix.) it is related that from the body of St. Paul were brought "handkerchiefs and aprons; and the diseases departed from those who touched them, and the evil spirits went out of them." There may, indeed, be false relics, but this does not destroy the value of those that are true, any more than counterfeit money destroys the value of that which is good. The Church can only provide with all possible care against their being venerated, as soon as it is discovered that they are false.

CHAP. XLIX. Of Divination.

BESIDES idolatry, there are several other kinds of sins by way of excess against the virtue of religion. But they may be reduced to the two heads of divination and vain observation. By divination is meant an inquiring into hidden things by the assistance of evil spirits, and by vain observation, which is more commonly called superstition, in the strict sense of the word, is meant a dependence upon frivolous and foolish things, which have no natural or supernatural tendency to effect the objects which are aimed at by their means. It is not indeed always easy or even possible to decide under which class particular sins may come, because we cannot determine whether or not there has been any express or tacit appeal to the power of the devil. Yet there still remains a plain distinction in character and guilt between what is done, or aimed at being done, through the agency of the devil, and what is done without such agency.

Divination is an inquiring into or regulating future events by the assistance of the devil. It is a sin against

the first commandment, not because the devil is *directly* put in the place of God and worshiped, as this would come under the sin of idolatry treated of in the last division; but indirectly, because by it one of the Divine prerogatives is in a degree attributed to the devil, and homage is paid to his power and knowledge. For God alone is omniscient; He alone can know what depends on His own will, or even what is contingent on the will of man. The devil, therefore, cannot really determine or regulate what is going to be; and to consult him as if he could, is to put him so far in the place of God. Some things, indeed, the devil and his angels can do that are past our knowledge and comprehension. For they still possess those great natural powers which God gave them at their creation. As pure spirits they are not tied to the same laws as we, who are encompassed and confined in mortal bodies. They can, therefore, see and know and do many things far beyond our power, and they are assisted by an experience of thousands of years, during which they have had an opportunity of observing the ways of men and the laws of nature, and hence they can easily foresee things that are quite hidden from our weaker powers. Yet it is not allowable to consult them even about these things, because they are the enemies of God, and use their power only to oppose His Divine will. Doing so knowingly cannot be otherwise than a great sin. It may be committed either by express agreement with the devil, or tacitly, when we do such things as can only be done by his coöperation.

Under the head of divination are included the following sins: sorcery or witchcraft, charms and spells, fortune-telling, necromancy and magic. Witchcraft is dealing expressly with the devil, either ourselves directly, or through the means of another person who has entered into a compact with him. Charms, spells, and incantations are certain things said or done to effect particular objects which they have no natural tendency to effect. Hence, they are either acts of cheating or dishonesty done to obtain money, or if they are any thing more, it is through diabolical agency. The same may be said of fortune-telling, which when done in earnest cannot be excused from great sin,

because nothing short of a revelation from God can make known to us what will befall us. Necromancy is inquiring of the dead; and magic is an art by which men profess to do things contrary to the laws of nature, without the intervention of God. Under this last description come mesmerism and animal magnetism, about which much controversy has arisen as to whether it is allowable to use them or permit their being used. The facts of the case not being yet made sufficiently clear, the Church has not laid down any absolute rule. Practically, however, it is sufficient to remember, that whenever we have reason to believe that these arts produce effects beyond what they can possibly do by natural means, or that, in fact, they do not produce them by natural means, but by diabolical, it becomes wrong for us to have any thing to do with them. The Scripture is very strong against this sin. "Neither let there be any wizard, nor charmer, nor any one that consulteth pythonic spirits, or fortune-tellers, or that seeketh the truth from the dead. For the Lord abhorreth all these things, and for these abominations He will destroy them at thy coming" (Deut. xviii., and also Lev. xx. 27). It has been thought that Saul filled up the measure of his guilt by committing this sin when the Lord departed from him (1 Kings xxviii.).

CHAP. L. Of Vain Observation or Superstition.

UNDER the third head of sins against religion by way of excess comes vain observation, more commonly called superstition. This does not suppose any intention of consulting evil spirits, but consists in paying attention to things of chance or accident, and attributing to words or actions a virtue God has not given them. The virtue of religion consists in worshipping God as we ought, that is to say, in the way He has commanded. The sin of superstition offends against this either by paying attention to things that are not entitled to any, or by paying to things that are entitled to some attention, more than they deserve. Of the first kind is astrology, which is attributing to

the stars a power over human affairs, and so endeavouring to foretell or regulate things by them. A belief in omens is another sin of this kind, which consists in observing any natural or accidental circumstances, and attributing to them a power of foreshadowing coming events. Believing in dreams, and acting upon our belief, is a sin of the same sort, or attributing a particular power to certain numbers or days as being lucky or unlucky. For these things have not any power of this sort naturally that we know of, and God has not given them any supernatural power. He might have done so if He pleased, just as we see He has appointed very simple words and actions as the matter and form of the Sacraments, and given them a supernatural power; but where He has not given this power it is superstition for men to take up any thing natural or accidental, and attribute a supernatural efficacy to it.

Yet while it is a sin to believe in observations of omens, dreams, or the stars, yet it must not be forgotten that God has been pleased at different times to lead men by these very things. We have a great number of instances in Scripture. With regard to some of these, we may suppose that God vouchsafed to turn the ignorant belief of men to good without in any way authorising that belief; but with regard to dreams, it is plain that many of them came direct from God. The history of Joseph is chiefly made up of what happened in fulfilment of dreams. Daniel prophesied from dreams, besides being endowed with the gift of interpreting them. In the New Testament we have the magi and St. Joseph guided in their conduct by dreams. And further, we have the Prophet Joel prophesying of the times when God should pour out His spirit upon all flesh: "and your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions" (Joel ii.); and St. Peter in his sermon on the day of Pentecost expressly applies this to the coming of the Holy Ghost (Acts ii.). Hence it is plain that when the Church teaches us that it is superstitious to pay attention to dreams, it does not mean that it is so in itself, or that we are not bound to attend to them, if we have reason to believe that they come from God; but that we are not to give

credence to our ordinary dreams, or too easily to believe that they come from God, since it is reasonable to suppose that God would guide us by the ordinary means that He has amply provided in His Church, rather than send us any special revelation in a dream. And even in the old law "to observe dreams" was forbidden (Deut. xviii. 10).

The other way in which we may be guilty of superstition, is by putting a greater confidence in legitimate objects of faith or devotion than we are authorised to do. For men may be superstitious about things that are really sacred, or may have a superstitious dread of what they may justly fear. Thus to trust one's salvation to particular practices of devotion,—say wearing the scapular, or a blessed medal, or belonging to a certain confraternity,—would be instances of a superstitious confidence in these things. To avoid sin, we must place just that trust and value in things which God has authorised. They possess efficacy only because, and so far as, He has given it to them, and beyond that they are worthless.

CHAP. LI. Of Irreligion.

LASTLY, we come to sins against the virtue of religion by way of defect, or of what is called irreligiosity or irreligion, and which means a want of reverence for God and what pertains to Him. These sins may be enumerated under four heads,—tempting God, sacrilege, blasphemy, and perjury. Of these, however, the two last form the special subject of the second commandment; so that it remains to speak of the two first. Tempting God. To tempt means to try; and so tempting God means trying the perfections or attributes of God, calling upon Him or expecting Him to show His wisdom, power, or mercy at our pleasure, and in ways that He has not promised. If a man, for instance, were, without a special inspiration, to abstain from all food for forty days, trusting to God to work a miracle to preserve his life, this would be a sin of tempting God. The devil tempted our Lord to this sin,

when he urged Him to cast Himself down from the pinnacle of the Temple, trusting to the goodness of God to preserve Him; and our Lord answered by saying that it was written, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." God has given us things natural and things supernatural, each in their own order and for their own uses; and as it is the sin of superstition to trust in natural things and to expect supernatural effects from them, so it is the sin of tempting God to neglect the natural and ordinary way of obtaining our ends, and to trust to a supernatural means of obtaining common things. The supernatural is not meant to supersede the natural, but to supply its weakness and defects, and so to obtain what the natural would not of itself be able to do. Thus men who pray for health while they neglect natural remedies,—or success in their undertakings while they do not use exertion,—or to escape from sin when they do not avoid the occasions of it, may all be guilty of tempting God.

The second sin of irreligion is sacrilege, which means a profanation of, or gross irreverence to, any thing sacred or dedicated to God, and it is divided into three sorts, according as it violates (1) holy persons, (2) holy places, or (3) holy things. Thus acts of violence upon persons of either sex who are dedicated to God, or sins of impurity committed by or with them, are sacrileges of the first sort. For if the bodies of all Christians are holy, as being the temples of the Holy Ghost, those are so in an especial manner who by a solemn vow have again dedicated themselves to His service. Sacrilege of holy places consists in any violation or profanation of them. Bloodshed, impurity, and under certain circumstances theft, committed in them are sins of this sort; or destroying them, or notably injuring them, or, lastly, putting them to any profane use, as for public trials, or scenic representations, or purposes of merchandise. The only occasion, it is observed, on which our Lord is related to have been angry and to have used violence, was to show His indignation against those who profaned the sanctity of the Temple, and made "His Father's house a place of merchandise" (St. John ii. 14). So we have an account in the Book of Machabees

of Helidorus' being miraculously struck in the Temple, which he came to rob; and when the Commandments were given on Mount Sinai, all the mount was sanctified by the presence of God, and if any one approached within its precincts he was struck through with a dart.

Sacrilege of holy things is committed by the profanation of any thing specially belonging to God. Thus to intrude into sacred offices without being ordained to it is a sin of this kind, which was punished in the case of Core, Dathan, and Abiram (Num. xvi.), and afterwards in the case of Ozias (2 Paral. xxvi. 16) by God Himself. To sell any sacred office or thing for money is a kind of sacrilege, and is called simony, from Simon Magus, who, as we read in the Acts (ch. viii.), offered money to the Apostles that he might obtain the sacred power they possessed. Another sin is to use sacred vessels and utensils to profane uses. This sin was punished in the case of Baltassar the king, who used the vessels of gold and silver which had been brought out of the Temple at Jerusalem for common purposes (Dan. v.). Or, lastly, it is a sacrilege of this sort to receive or administer the Sacraments unworthily. But this will be explained more fully in the chapter on the Sacraments.

CHAP. LII.

The Second Commandment: "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain."

THERE are three ways in which sin is committed, by thought, word, and deed. The second commandment is directed against sins of word, but those particularly which offend against God, as distinguished from those against our neighbour, forbidden by the eighth commandment. This commandment is virtually contained in the first, which teaches us to adore and reverence God as God. (Malachias i. 6); and not taking God's name in vain is a part of this obligation. But to show the importance of this obligation, a distinct commandment was given respecting it, and, moreover, a special threat was added against any that should violate it. For in the twentieth

chapter of Exodus, and in the parallel passage in the book of Deuteronomy (ch. v. 11), we find these words subjoined, "for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh the name of the Lord his God in vain."

The Jews held the Holy Name of Jehovah in such reverence that they would scarcely ever name it, but spoke of it as the incommunicable name, or described it as the *tetragrammaton*, the word of four letters, as it is in the Hebrew. But this was rather a superstitious than a true way of observing this commandment. For what is meant by Name here is not the simple bare word, but that which is signified by that word, or any other word of similar signification. And so the Roman Catechism says, that though the word is used in the singular, yet we are to understand any name by which God is designated or referred to, as when we speak of "the Almighty," "the Supreme Being," &c.; and "to take" God's name means to use it, or bring it into conversation.

We are not forbidden to do this, but to do it in vain. There is a difference between the things that are forbidden by the commandments of God. Some are forbidden always, as being bad in themselves under whatever circumstances; whereas other things are not always bad, and therefore not always forbidden, but only when they are inordinate, *i. e.* done not at the time, or in the way in which they were intended to be done,—done as it were out of order. Now taking God's name is one of this sort of things. It is not wrong to speak of God, or to bring in His name. On the contrary, the more men are actuated by faith and the presence of God, the more continually will they refer and appeal to Him in their words and thoughts.* But always "in order" to honour Him. This commandment, therefore, does not forbid this, but taking God's name in vain, *i. e.* in such a manner, or with such a purpose, that He will not be honoured but dishonoured thereby. And this may be done in several ways.

* Hence it is commonly amongst those who have strong faith, but without virtue, that swearing is most prevalent. Where faith does not exist, or is dying out, appeals to God lose their meaning and force.

The explanation of this commandment may be divided into two parts, viz. what it commands and what it forbids. Directly and expressly it forbids any irreverence to the name of God by blasphemy, profanity, or unlawful oaths or vows. Indirectly, therefore, and by implication, it enjoins the contrary to this, that we should speak with reverence of God and all holy things, and should keep our lawful oaths and vows. Yet, for convenience-sake, it will be best to consider this commandment, not under this division, but under that of, first, oaths; secondly, vows; and thirdly, blasphemy, cursing, and profane words.

CHAP. LIII. Of Oaths.

By an oath is meant calling God to witness the truth of what we assert, or to our sincerity in what we promise. This may be done in many ways, nor does it signify what form of words, or what ceremonies, are used to express that we are appealing to God. If such form or ceremony is meant and understood to be an appeal to God, it has the nature of an oath. An oath is not in itself wrong. The Israelites were enjoined to fear the Lord their God, and "to swear by His name" (Deut. vi. 18); and so again in Jeremias (chap. iv. 2), "Thou shalt swear: as the Lord liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in justice." Our Lord, indeed, in His Sermon on the Mount, seems to forbid it entirely: "You have heard that it was said to them of old, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform thy oaths to the Lord. But I say to thee not to swear at all; neither by heaven, for it is the throne of God; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great king" (St. Matt. v. 33, 34). And there is a similar passage in St. James (chap. v. 12). And there have at different times been heretics, as the Pelagians, Wicliffites, Anabaptists, and in our own day Quakers, who have denied that it was ever lawful to take an oath. Yet the Church has not so interpreted this passage. The meaning is, therefore, that, whereas in old times it was said that men might swear, so long as they did not forswear themselves,

now they were not to swear in any way, either by God, or heaven, or earth, at their own will and discretion, but only when necessity obliged them. That calling God to witness is not under all circumstances wrong, is proved not only by the constant teaching of the Church, but by St. Paul, who sets himself as an example to his flock, nevertheless, in several places of his Epistles, calling God to witness (see Romans i. 9; 2 Cor. i. 23; Philipp. i. 8; 1 Thess. ii. 5); by the cases that are given us of the angels calling God to witness (Apoc. x. 6; Dan. xii. 7); and lastly, as the Roman Catechism reminds us, the Scriptures speak of God Himself confirming things by an oath (Gen. xxii. 16; Ps. cix. 4).

When, therefore, is this the case? or when are we to consider that there is sufficient cause for taking an oath? It is a sufficient cause when our lawful superiors, ecclesiastical or secular, call upon us to do so, or for any grave or just cause. And we may consider it to be a grave and just cause when God's honour, or our own good, or our neighbour's, demands it of us. For both the origin and object of oaths are good. An oath was a method of putting an end to controversy and dispute, as St. Paul tells us (Heb. vi. 16), by appealing to Him before whom all things lie naked and open. It is therefore right, and sometimes laudable, to take an oath, provided only it is taken with the proper conditions. These conditions are commonly reduced to those three which are enumerated by the prophet Jeremias (chap. iv. 2): "Thou shalt swear: as the Lord liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in justice." Or we may say, with the Catechism, that the oaths forbidden are all false, rash, unjust, and unnecessary oaths.

False oaths. The most important quality of an oath is that it should be true,—that it should be an exact representation of the mind of the person who takes it. A true oath does not exclude error, but insincerity. If a person swore to something that he sincerely believed to be true, though it turned out not to be so, this would not be a false oath, because he believed it at the time. And if a person swore to something he thought to be false, he would be guilty of perjury, although the thing afterwards

turned out to be true. So also that person would be guilty of a false oath who called God to witness that he would do something which he did not mean to do. A false oath, when taken deliberately, is always a mortal sin even though it may be about a trifling matter, because it is a grievous and great irreverence to God to call Him to witness to the truth of any thing which we believe not to be true.

Rash and unnecessary oaths. Under this head are included all those oaths which have not the second quality required by the prophet, viz. judgment. There are many cases in which a person swears to something which at the moment he believes to be true, so that he does not incur the guilt of a false oath; but a moment's reflection would lead him to see that he cannot be sure of what he says, so that he is taking a rash oath. Or else the matter he is speaking about is of too trifling a character to make it right to appeal to God about it, and so it is an unnecessary oath. Jephthe, as some think, was guilty of a rash oath in promising to offer as a holocaust whatever should first meet him on his return from victory (Judges xi. 31). And Saul certainly was, when he took an oath against whoever should touch food till he was avenged of his enemies (1 Kings xiv.). Those are most often guilty of unnecessary oaths who have contracted a habit of swearing, and so assert the most trifling things upon oath. In both these cases the quality of judgment is wanting, or that consideration which reflects, before bringing in the name of God, whether the case is so clear as to permit an oath, and whether it is so important as to make it necessary, as otherwise it is taking God's name in vain. The reason why children should not be easily called on to take oaths is, because from their age they are so much more likely to take them rashly and thoughtlessly, or without judgment.

Yet, unless some contempt for God's name, or danger of scandal or perjury, is mixed up with them, rash and unnecessary oaths are only venial sins, because they do not contain any grave irreverence towards Almighty God.

Unjust oaths. But there are some oaths which, besides being rash and unnecessary, are also unjust, and which will

be mortal or venial sins according as that about which they are taken is of trifling or serious consequence; though some think that to take an oath to do any thing wrong is always a mortal sin. This quality of justice, which is the third thing required for a lawful oath, for the most part regards promises made on oath, and it requires that the thing, which is so promised should be just and lawful. Herod's oath to give to Herodias's daughter whatever she asked, even to the half of his kingdom (Mark vi. 23), was not only a rash but an unjust oath; because her request might involve a crime, as in fact it did. So, too, those men who, as we read in the Acts (ch. xxvi.), bound themselves by an oath that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed St. Paul, were guilty of an unjust oath.

If an oath has the three qualities of truth, judgment, and justice, it is a lawful oath. By the second commandment we are commanded to keep such an oath, and it would be a sin to break it. If a promise made on oath fails in one of these qualities, we are not always bound to keep it; but this question will be more naturally spoken of in the next chapter.

CHAP. LIV. Of Vows.

A vow is defined to be a promise, willingly made to God, that we will do something pleasing to Him. It comes under this second commandment, because, like an oath, it appeals to God; but it differs from a promissory oath in this, that while an oath may be about what is bad as well as good, a vow is only about something good. This distinction is not always preserved. Sometimes men speak of vowing to kill a person, or not to speak to a neighbour. But commonly this would be called an oath, while we should speak of vowing something intended for the service of God. A vow differs, again, from a resolution. For a resolution only expresses a determined design or intention to do a thing, without binding ourselves to any one else that we will do it. But a vow is a promise, and in making a promise we bind ourselves to do the thing.

Yet it is not a mere promise, but a promise willingly made to God. For though we speak of making vows to the Blessed Virgin and the Saints, yet what we mean by this is, that we promise to God, through the Saints or in honour of the Saints.

It must be made willingly; for if it were done under constraint it would not be a vow. There must be as much freedom of the will, and advertence to what we are doing, as is necessary, on the other side, to constitute a mortal sin.

Lastly, a vow is a promise of something pleasing to God, either by doing that which is good, or avoiding that which is evil. For a vow is a sort of offering to God, and therefore must consist of something which we suppose to be pleasing to Him, and which He will accept. Thus the chief matter of vows is the evangelical counsels, or those things which we find our Lord recommending to us in the Gospels, not as matters of strict obligation, but as means by which we may serve Him with greater perfection. The most important of these are, poverty, chastity, and obedience; and it is to these, therefore, that religious, or those who dedicate themselves specially to the service of God, generally bind themselves.

There are several different kinds of vows. 1st. Vows may be either personal or real. Real vows are those in which some thing, "*res*," is promised. Personal are those in which the action or condition of a person is the subject of the vow; as when a man makes a vow of chastity or obedience. 2d. Vows may be either Temporal or Perpetual, according to whether the thing or person concerned is vowed for a time only or for ever. 3d. But by far the most important division of vows is into simple or solemn vows. Not because these vows are necessarily different in themselves, but because the obligation of the one is so much more stringent than that of the other. A solemn vow differs from a simple vow in being made in some particular Religious Order, or in some other way in which the Church has sanctioned the taking of solemn vows. They are then received and considered by the Church as solemn, and made by the person with the in-

tention of their being so received and considered. Such is the vow of chastity made by those who enter into sacred orders, and the vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience taken by the Cistercians, Benedictines, Carthusians, Carmelites, and some other Orders, in which the Church has sanctioned the making of solemn vows. Many, however, of the more modern religious Orders or Congregations only take simple vows.

Such being the nature of vows, the next thing to be considered is, what is the obligation of them, or how far they are binding on those who take them. The Catechism teaches that the second commandment commands us to keep our lawful vows. We should, therefore, be taking God's name in vain by making an unlawful vow, or by not keeping a lawful one, after binding ourselves to do so. Holy Scripture expressly teaches this obligation: "When thou hast made a vow, thou shalt not delay to pay it, because the Lord thy God will require it; and if thou delay it, it shall be imputed to thee for a sin" (Deut. xxiii. 21). And reason teaches us that if the promises which one man makes to another are binding, much more are those which he makes to God. On the other hand, if a person should bind himself by an oath or vow to that which was unlawful, *i. e.* to any thing contrary to justice and the law of God, not only would he not be bound to keep it, but he would be bound not to keep it. If he made the vow or oath knowing the thing to be wrong, he is guilty of an unjust oath or vow; if without thought or care, his oath or vow was a rash one, since it wanted judgment. In either case he has committed a sin, in taking an oath or vow that he could not lawfully take, because he cannot lawfully keep it, and would sin in attempting to do so. His sin in taking it is greater or less in degree, according to the degree in which he knew the thing to be wrong. If he could not know it to be wrong, he is excused from sin.

What sin does a person commit who breaks a lawful vow or promissory oath? This depends generally on the thing vowed or promised. If a matter of moment, the sin is mortal; if a trifling matter, venial.

Vows, however, may cease to be binding on the conscience, and this from two causes. First, there may arise some circumstance making it impossible to fulfil them; or secondly, they may be annulled, dispensed with, or changed by authority. The first case happens when, *e. g.*, a person who is under the will of another makes a vow. Such a vow can be annulled by the superior when he comes to hear of it. This case was especially provided for in the law of Moses (Num. xxx.). Thus a child's vow might be invalidated by its father, or a wife's by her husband; and that even without a reasonable cause, because they are at the disposal of those to whom they belong.

To dispense from a vow, is to take away the obligation of keeping it. To commute a vow is to change the good work vowed to some other. When a person has taken a vow, circumstances may arise which may render it, not indeed impossible, but very difficult or unadvisable for him to keep it. It may interfere with others' welfare or with his own. Superiors, therefore, have the power of dispensing in such cases from a vow, or of changing the obligation of it to something else that is not liable to the same objections. Superiors of religious houses, Bishops in their dioceses, and often even confessors, have this power. But a vow cannot be dispensed from without a reasonable cause; and the facility of obtaining a dispensation, even when there is a reasonable cause for it, depends much on the nature of the vow, and whether it is a simple or a solemn one. There are five vows which the Pope only can dispense with or commute. These are, (1) a vow of perpetual chastity; (2) a vow to enter a religious Order; (3) and a vow to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, (4) to St. Peter's at Rome, or (5) to the church of St. James of Compostella in Spain. Yet there are certain circumstances under which a Bishop can dispense from even these. It should be added, that no one, not even the Pope, can dispense from a vow, when such a dispensation would interfere with the just rights of another person.

CHAP. LV. Of Cursing, Blasphemy, and Profane Words.

By the second commandment we are commanded, the Catechism says, to speak with reverence of God and all holy things. The commandment, indeed, only speaks of God; but as we cannot show contempt or disrespect to what belongs to a person without its extending to that person himself, so we cannot exhibit that honour which is due to God, if we do not honour also all that belongs to or is connected with Him. This is what is meant by 'holy things,'—God's saints, God's ministers, religion, its ceremonies and practices. We are bound to speak with reverence of these because they relate to God.

Now that which is most directly opposed to this reverence is blasphemy. It is the worst and most heinous way of taking God's name in vain. Cursing and profane words are lesser sins of the same character. But they differ from oaths or vows, because these, as we have explained, are sometimes lawful and even laudable; but cursing, blasphemy, and profanity are, under all circumstances, sinful.

The word 'blasphemy' is derived from two Greek roots, and signifies wounding or injuring the reputation. But it has come to be applied especially to any thing said against God or His perfections. It is defined, 'any words or speeches insulting to God.' It is divided into direct blasphemy, or that which is spoken against God Himself or His attributes; and indirect, which is spoken against the saints or holy things relating to God. It is also divided into simple and heretical blasphemy, of which the latter is distinguished from the former in containing something contrary to the faith, as *e. g.* denying some of God's perfections, or attributing them to creatures, or again, attributing an imperfection to God.

Blasphemy is always in itself a mortal sin. It is so spoken of in Scripture: "He that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, dying, let him die" (Lev. xxiv. 16). And the very nature of the sin shows that it is one of the most grievous a man can be guilty of. For what can be worse than knowingly and wilfully to say any thing insulting to

God. It can only, then, be excused from the guilt of mortal sin when it is done without full knowledge and advertence. Sometimes an expression is blasphemous or not, according to the meaning of the person who uses it; *e. g.* when persons curse the rain or wind, the amount of sin depends on whether they look upon these as directly sent by God or not.

By cursing is meant imprecating some harm or mischief on our neighbour, or any of God's creatures. It differs from merely wishing harm to them, because it implies also a sort of prayer, or calling down harm upon them from Heaven. In so far as it is a desire of ill to our neighbour, it is contrary to the precept of charity; but, because it is a direct or virtual invocation of God's name, it comes under the second commandment. Cursing is a mortal or venial sin, according to circumstances. Often curses are used simply as hasty expressions, without a person at all meaning what he says, or intending any irreverence to God. This will excuse many persons who, having contracted the habit of swearing or cursing, are trying to overcome themselves, but the words slip out of their mouth without their thinking about it. Sometimes curses may be greater sins on account of their giving scandal to others: *e. g.* if parents curse in the presence of their children, the sin is greater from the danger of the children being led to do the same. Also, something depends on whether the harm that is imprecated is a grievous or a trifling one.

Lastly, profane words are forbidden by this commandment as being contrary to the reverence due to God, and what belongs to Him, or tending to lessen it. Thus, speaking in a light or joking manner about any thing belonging to God or His service is profane. It is not generally a grievous sin, because there is no intention of insulting God; and often the profane words have but a remote connexion with God, or His service; but should such words be spoken out of contempt for sacred things, the sin would become mortal.

CHAP. LVI.

The Third Commandment: "Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath-day."

As in the first commandment God requires the worship of the heart, and in the second the worship of the tongue, so in the third He demands a certain portion of our time, wherein we may acknowledge Him by external acts. All our time ought to be employed in the service of God, and all our actions should be directed to Him; but all our time cannot immediately be so used, nor can we direct all our actions to Him alone; for we have temporal wants to supply, and temporal duties, the neglect of which would be sinful; and lest such should engross us, and cause us to forget God, for whom they ought to be done, we are commanded to set aside a portion of our time for acts which have sole reference to God. In other words, we are bidden to keep holy certain days, *i. e.* consecrate them in a special manner to religious worship. The commandment given at length is, "Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath-day. Six days shalt thou labour, and shalt do all thy works. But on the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: thou shalt do no work on it, thou nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy beast, nor the stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them, and rested on the seventh day: therefore the Lord blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it" (Exod. xx. 8-11).

Now this principle of devoting a portion of our time to the external service of God is here specially applied to the case of the Jews. So far as it exhibits that principle, it is a part of the law of nature, and binds all, without regard to time or nation; but in its particular injunctions as to the day and manner of observance, it is a part of the older covenant, which has been superseded by Christianity. In the ancient law God chose the last day of the week to be kept holy, and it was called the Sabbath, or rest, because on that day He rested from the work of

creation ; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them, and rested on the seventh day : therefore the Lord blessed the seventh day. In the rehearsal of the law another reason is assigned : " Remember that thou also didst serve in Egypt, and the Lord thy God brought thee out from thence with a strong hand and a stretched-out arm. Therefore hath He commanded thee that thou shouldst observe the Sabbath-day" (Deut. v. 15).

In resting, then, from labour on the seventh day, the Jew commemorated his deliverance from Egyptian bondage, and testified to the surrounding nations that Jehovah, the God he worshiped, was the Creator of all things. But under the Christian dispensation God has bestowed more abundant blessings on the first day of the week, and laid the foundations of a more excellent feast. On that day He rose in His human nature from the dead ; on that day He appeared to His apostles after His resurrection ; on that day the Holy Ghost came down upon the disciples of the Lord. Hence the Christian, in dedicating the first day of the week to God, acknowledges that He who brought life and immortality to light is the same who in the beginning called the light out of darkness : he commemorates a more perfect redemption than that of Israel from Pharaoh ; he honours each Person of the Blessed Trinity,—the Father, who began the new creation by raising His Son from the dead,—the Son, who rose for our justification,—the Holy Ghost, who descended to carry out that work in each individual soul.

The Sabbath, then, for us Christians no longer exists ; it has passed away with other Jewish feasts. This the Apostle plainly declares : " Let no man judge you in respect of a festival-day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come" (Col. ii. 16-17). On the other hand, we have proof that it was the practice of the Apostles and first Christians to observe religiously the first day of the week. Eight days after the resurrection, the disciples were within, and Thomas with them, and Jesus came and stood in the midst (St. John xxi. 26). Later, in Acts xx. 7, we read that upon

the first day the disciples assembled to break bread. Again, we find St. Paul commanding the Corinthians: "On the first day of the week let every one of you put apart with himself, laying up what it shall well please him" (1 Cor. xvi. 2). And the first day is recognised as the Lord's day: "I was in the Spirit," says St. John, "on the Lord's day" (Apoc. i. 10). And so the Church, following this custom, has determined for Christians the observance of the third commandment by a precept which bids us keep holy the first day of the week.

CHAP. LVII.

Of the Obligation of hearing Mass and resting from servile work.

THE next point for consideration is, how we are to keep the Sunday holy. As matter of formal precept, binding under pain of mortal sin, nothing further is required than to hear Mass and abstain from servile works.

In order to fulfil the first duty, we must be bodily present in the place where the Mass is celebrated, in such a manner as to form part of the congregation, and attend with the mind, sufficiently at least to join in the Mass as an act of Divine worship.

It is not enough to be present during a part of the Mass, but the precept applies to the whole Mass. To absent oneself wilfully, and without proper excuse, during any part of the Mass is forbidden; but, as in all other cases of the like kind, the guilt varies with the length or importance of the part omitted. It is a mortal sin to be culpably absent during a considerable portion of the Mass, and a venial sin to be absent during a small part. It is necessary, however, to bear in mind, that the grievousness of the omission is estimated, not simply by the length of time which the part omitted occupies, but also by its importance in reference to the Sacrifice. Thus it is generally considered a mortal sin to be absent from the beginning of the Mass to the Offertory, because such an omission is considerable in point of length. It is a mortal sin to be

absent without cause during the Elevation, because, though it occupies a very short time, it is the most solemn and most essential part of the Mass. It is a mortal sin to leave before the priest's Communion, both on account of the length and the importance of the omission. It is a venial sin, or no sin at all, where there is a legitimate excuse, to arrive during the Epistle, or to leave after the priest's Communion.

The methods of assisting at Mass will vary, of course, according to each one's capacities and wants. Those who can read will for the most part follow the priest, by using the Missal, or a book containing suitable prayers. A good way is to meditate on the Passion and Death of Christ, and make acts of faith, hope, charity, and contrition. Those who can neither read nor meditate may say the Rosary or other vocal prayers. But all should remember to join in the act of sacrifice, and unite with the priest in offering up the Body and Blood of Christ for these four ends : 1. For God's honour and glory, who deserves so holy a Victim ; 2. In thanksgiving for all His mercies ; 3. To propitiate His offended Majesty ; 4. To obtain all those graces and blessings we need. For the Church does not command us to say prayers, but to hear Mass, that is, to join in the act of sacrifice. Hence we can never supply the omission of this duty by any other devotions, whether private or public. Only those who are physically or morally unable to go are justified in staying away from Mass on a Sunday. The sick, and those who have to take care of them, are of course dispensed, as well as mothers and nurses, who cannot leave their children without danger. Inclement weather, a bad state of the roads, a considerable distance from the church, *e. g.* three or four miles, will excuse those whose condition renders it difficult for them to surmount such obstacles. And, in general, no one is, strictly speaking, bound to encounter serious inconvenience in order to hear Mass.

Work is divided into three classes, servile, liberal, and common. Servile works are those occupations which employ the body rather than the mind, such as are usually performed by servants or uneducated persons.

Liberal works are those in which the mind is more engaged than the body; they are so called because they are prosecuted by persons in an independent position. Common works are those which are pursued by men of all classes, whether educated or not,—such as fishing, shooting, hunting, and the like.

Liberal and common work are allowed, even for the sake of gain, *e. g.* a person might give lessons on the Sunday in drawing, writing, reading, music, and dancing, without violating the third commandment. But all unnecessary servile works are strictly prohibited. The prohibition extends to all public transaction of business, whether of a mercantile or forensic character, and, except such things as may be needed for daily consumption, all buying and selling in shops. Observe, unnecessary servile works alone are forbidden: hence a person does not break the commandment who works to avoid any serious loss. It is lawful to reap corn, or mow hay, or to gather in fruit, when such things would be likely to suffer from bad weather. It is lawful to perform all those household duties which are necessary for cleanliness and the preparation of food. Again, we may do servile works on a Sunday to relieve the pressing needs of our neighbour, if we are actuated simply by charity, for such works sanctify rather than profane the day. "What man shall there be among you," said our Lord, "that hath one sheep, and if the same fall into a pit on the Sabbath-day, will he not take hold of it and lift it up? How much better is a man than a sheep! Therefore it is lawful to do a good deed on the Sabbath-day" (St. Matt. xii. 11, 12). Piety also excuses any work which the service of God or interests of religion require.

Although by hearing Mass and abstaining from servile works we keep the letter of the law, something more is required to fulfil its spirit. Why are we bidden to abstain from servile work, but in order that we may directly honour and serve God, and look after our souls. The Church wishes her children to hear sermons, to attend the public services of the Church according to the custom of the place, more or less to employ the day in prayer and works of piety. It is plainly contrary to her

intention that we should hear Mass, and spend the rest of the day in idleness or frivolous amusements. Not that innocent recreation is out of place on the Sunday; for the day is one of refreshment to the body, in order that we may the better serve God. Yet we should not forget the end of the commandment, but bear in mind that while that which is excessive or dangerous is always to be avoided, so is it in a special manner contrary to the spirit of the Lord's day.

The subject of other feasts which are included in the scope of this commandment will be dealt with under the precepts of the Church.

CHAP. LVIII.

The Fourth Commandment: "Honour thy father and thy mother."

THE fourth commandment is the beginning of the second table of the law, or that which concerns our neighbour. As the first table is summed up in the precept to love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength, so the second table is summed up in the precept to love our neighbour as ourselves. But while the first has no limits,—we cannot go too far in loving or reverencing God,—the second, on the other hand, enjoins us to love our neighbour up to a certain point. The excellence of our obedience to the second table of the law consists in our giving to each one just that amount of love, reverence, and obedience which is his due. Moreover, we are to love God for His own sake; and loving our neighbour is only, so to speak, a branch of this love, for we are to love our neighbour also for God's sake. Hence, our neighbour is to be loved with that measure of love which is consistent with and comes from the love of God. Lest we should have any doubt of this, or lest we should think that it can lawfully interfere with the love of God, our Lord says, "He that loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me" (St. Matt. x. 37). And still more strongly: "If any man come to Me and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his

own life also, he cannot be My disciple" (Luke xiv. 26); that is, if he does not hate them in comparison of Me. The much higher obligation of that which we owe to God over that which we owe to our neighbour, is important to be borne in mind in an age and country in which omissions of duty towards our neighbour are made so much more of than those towards God, whose *right* to the love and obedience of His creatures is scarcely recognised.

Yet if the first commandment is most important in the order of things, as enjoining the highest and greatest duty, the fourth comes first in order of time. For the duty of honouring and obeying our parents is the first that we learn, and it is only through obedience to this that we learn the still higher duty of loving and obeying God. God has so ordained that each child, as he comes into the world, should begin with the easier and obvious duty of loving and obeying his parents,—the natural authors and preservers of his being,—before he goes on to the harder yet more important lesson of loving and obeying "his Father who is in heaven." And he who does not succeed in the easier duty will not be likely to do so in the more difficult one. "For he," says St. John, "who loves not his brother, whom he sees, how can he love God, whom he sees not?" (1 John iv. 20.) It may have been because this love and obedience to our parents is strictly the root and foundation of all other virtues, that a special reward was promised in the old law for its observance: "Honour thy father and thy mother, that thou mayest live long in the land which the Lord thy God shall give thee" (Exodus xx. 12). While, on the other hand, disobedience to parents was ordered to be punished with death.

As the first commandment of the first table begins by commanding the acknowledgment of God, and our duty towards Him as God, and the two other commandments are only a more particular enforcing of duties, which flow from and are virtually contained in the first, so, in like manner, the first commandment of the second table lays down a positive command respecting our parents, and the duty we owe to them; and the other six prohibitions that follow are only a further enlargement and fuller

explanation of that duty. For by our neighbours are meant all those persons whom we come across and have dealings with amongst our fellow-men; and of these our parents are the first that we know, and have the greatest claims on us. The greatest duty is put before us and the lesser are included in it, just as in other commands it is for the most part the *greatest* sin of each kind that is forbidden by name, and the smaller species are virtually included. It is to this effect that our Lord Himself explained to His disciples how they had to keep the commandments (Matt. chap. v).

The fourth commandment divides itself into two parts. Primarily, it regards the obligations of children to their parents; and secondly, by implication, the duties which parents owe to their children.

CHAP. IIX. Of the Duties of Children to their Parents.

Two things have here to be explained: first, who are included under the word 'parents'; and secondly, what duties are implied by the term 'honour.'

By parents are meant primarily our natural father and mother. But, besides these, there are many others who hold in a greater or less degree the same position with regard to us. First, our ecclesiastical superiors, who stand in so similar a situation with regard to our souls as our parents do with regard to our bodies, that we call them our spiritual fathers. Secondly, all those whom we find ourselves placed under in temporal matters, as magistrates, masters, guardians, and teachers. And lastly, all whom age and character place in a high position, although they may have no direct authority over us. We find examples in Holy Scripture of all these classes of persons being called by the name of Father, and many precepts are given to treat them with respect and reverence.

The word 'honour' means to hold a person in high esteem, and it is purposely used here as enjoining all the duties which we owe to our parents and superiors. Were we told to love our parents, this would not imply reverence.

Were we told to fear them, we might do this without loving them. But to honour a person we must both fear and love him, and this is what we are here commanded to do. Though, to bring out more distinctly all our duties to them, these duties are commonly divided into three heads: (1) to love them; (2) to reverence them; (3) to obey them.

We are bound to love our parents with the love of benevolence,* that is, to desire for them every temporal and spiritual good, and, as far as occasion offers, to endeavour to procure it for them. For a love that was only internal, and did not manifest itself in external actions, when occasion called for them, would betray its insincerity. Hence a person would violate this obligation who should exhibit, in words or manner, any thing like ill-will to his parents, or neglect to show them affection; if he should treat them hardly or harshly, or should provoke them to anger. "He is cursed of God that angereth his mother" (Ecclus. iii. 18). Much more would a person commit a sin who neglected his parents in their temporal or spiritual necessity, since this would be most contrary to the love he owes them. As parents are bound to provide for their children every thing that they require, both for body and soul, so, should the parents come to want, the children are bound to provide for them to the best of their ability; and this, not only for their temporal wants, but to take care that in their illness they have the Sacraments; and if they are leading bad negligent lives, they are bound, respectfully and tenderly, to remind them of the care of their souls. They are bound likewise to fulfil their dying wishes, and to take care for their burial. All this is grounded on the obligation they owe to their parents as being the authors of their life, and having preserved and taken care of them. "With thy whole heart honour thy father, and forget not the groanings of thy mother. Remember that thou hadst not been born but through them; and make a return to them as they have done to thee" (Ecclus. vii. 28).

It is not easy to determine when a neglect of this duty becomes a mortal sin. Very much must depend on the circumstances of each case, the degree of want of the

* See chapter on Charity, p. 108.

parents, and the ability of the children. But that it is a matter of strict obligation, and that not of charity but of justice, we learn from our Lord's upbraiding the Pharisees for "making void the commandment of God" by their tradition (Matt. xv. 6). This was because they maintained that a man might dedicate to God that which he should have spent in assisting his parents in their necessity. And so the Church teaches that it is not lawful for a man to dedicate his property or himself to religion, if by so doing he would be unable to fulfil a present obligation to assist his parents in their necessity. For obedience to God's commands is of higher importance than counsels of perfection.

Secondly, we owe reverence to our parents; and this because they stand in the place of God to us. We know God through them, and are taught from the first duty of honouring our parents to ascend to the higher one of honouring God. "The son honoureth the father; if, then, I be a Father, where is My honour? saith the Lord of Hosts" (Mal. i. 6). This reverence must be shown in words and actions, and also in bearing with patience their faults or defects, and putting up with their infirmities in sickness and old age: "Honour thy father in word and work, and in all patience" (Ecclesiasticus iii. 9). The Catechism particularly specifies contempt as being forbidden, because this is of all things the most opposed to that reverence which we owe to our parents. But there are many lesser degrees of the same thing which are violations of this obligation. It is a sin against the reverence we owe to our parents to expose or ridicule them for their faults; to strike them, or even to raise the hand as if to do so; to curse them, or to use opprobrious and insulting language to them, or to show them disrespect by looks or manner. These are greater or less sins, according as they proceed from a greater or less degree of contempt or intentional disrespect. For any thing done, or omitted to be done, however harmless in itself, if it is done out of disrespect, becomes a sin against this commandment. Cursing a parent, however, can seldom be otherwise than a grievous sin; and so in the old law it was enjoined

that he that cursed his father or mother was to be put to death (Exod. xxi. 17).

The third duty we owe to our parents is obedience. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord" (Eph. vi. 1). And there are a great many passages in Scripture where this duty is insisted on. This obedience is not merely to be an outward one, nor is it to be unwilling and hesitating. What is required is a ready and cheerful obedience, and one which is a real internal submission of the heart and will. Disobedience to parents is a greater or less sin according to the gravity of the matter. A great many of the acts of disobedience of which children are guilty relate to matters of trifling importance; and commands of this sort are given by parents without any intention of their being always and literally obeyed. These, and even more serious obligations, when they are broken through the thoughtlessness and weakness of childhood, are not grievous sins. But when a command is laid upon a child in such a way that it knows its parents think it a matter of consequence, then it would be a mortal sin wilfully to violate it without necessity. Such are the commands given by parents to their children, strictly forbidding them to go to particular places, or to remain in the company of particular persons, or enjoining them to the present performance of some important duty.

The only case in which the obligation of obedience entirely ceases is when parents should command that which is contrary either to the laws of God or the evangelical counsels. This is on the principle laid down by St. Peter in his answer to the rulers, "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts v. 29). If, then, the commands of our parents or other lawful superiors should clash with the commands of God, we are of course bound to prefer the commands of God. For the very obligation of obeying our parents arises only from the command of God. So St. Paul puts it: "Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is pleasing to God" (Col. iii. 20). But suppose a child is doubtful whether the command of its parent is lawful, should it obey? If possible, it should make inquiry, so as to be sure one way or the other; but

if, as often happens, this is not possible, it should presume that the command is a lawful one; because, ordinarily, the parent is better informed than the child, and would not enjoin that which was wrong. Children are not bound to obey their parents when they would persuade them to resist an inspiration of God to follow the evangelical counsels. And this on the same principle that, when God calls on us, all other things are of less importance than obeying Him. Our Lord teaches us this when He said, that whoever would be His disciple must hate father and mother in comparison with Him. Yet though children are not to disobey a call from God at the wish of their parents, yet its being against their wish ought to make them very careful to be sure that it really is a call from God, and not an imagination of their own. A somewhat similar case is when parents endeavour unreasonably to control their children in marrying, either, *e. g.* to force them to marry a person they dislike, or to prevent them contracting a fitting marriage. Yet children should not in such a case take upon themselves to decide that their parents are unreasonable, but listen to what they say, and ask the advice of their confessor before they venture to disobey them. It should be remembered, too, that though children may not be bound in certain cases to obey their parents, yet that this does not release them from the obligation of showing them respect and reverence. Nor are children ever released from the duty of love and reverence towards their parents, though the duty of obeying them is greatly modified by circumstances when they are of age, and are removed from their protection and control.

CHAP. LX. Of the Duties of Subjects to their Superiors.

IN defining the word 'parents' it has been already explained that every kind of lawful superior is by implication included. The reason of this is, that they stand in the place of our parents. Our parents refer us to them as persons to whom they have delegated their authority in certain particulars, as *e. g.* our teachers, or to whom they have

transferred their right over us, as in the case of apprentices and servants. This was much more easily understood in ancient times, when, in most countries, parents were considered to have such absolute power over their children that they could sell them as slaves, or even put them to death. But since the Church has been established on earth, rulers spiritual; and even temporal, exercise a sort of control over parents in what they claim from their children. And hence, partly from this cause, and partly from that already mentioned, of parents committing their authority to others, it is that we find ourselves under many superiors of different sorts. And so the Catechism says that "we are bound to obey, not only our parents, but also our Bishops, pastors, magistrates, and masters."

But we are not bound to obey these either in the same manner or in the same degree as our parents, but only each in their own order, and in proportion as each of them hold the same place in our regard as our parents do. And the question is how far they do each of them hold this place. To lay down accurately what duties they claim from us, and under what circumstances we are bound or not bound to obey them, would take up more time and space than can be given to it here. The best rule to go by is to follow the ordinary practice of other persons in the same circumstances, where those persons seem careful in the performance of their duty, and in any case of doubt to seek the instruction and guidance of the ministers of God, whose business it is to endeavour to correct any errors that are creeping into practice.

The duties, however, of subjects to those who are over them are strongly and frequently enforced in Scripture, and especially in the New Testament. "Obey your prelates, and be subject to them. For they watch as being to render an account of your souls; that they may do this with joy, and not with grief" (Heb. xiii. 17). "Let every soul be subject to higher powers: for there is no power but from God: and those that are, are ordained of God. Therefore he that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God. And they that resist, purchase to themselves damnation" (Rom. xiii. 1). So the duty of sub-

jection to temporal rulers : " Be subject, therefore, to every human creature for God's sake ; whether it be to the king as excelling, or to governors as sent by Him for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of the good" (1 Pet. ii. 17). Wives are commanded to be subject to their husbands (1 Pet. iii. 1), and servants to their masters (Eph. vi. 1). And not only are they to show them obedience, but fidelity and honour : " Exhort servants to be obedient to their masters, in all things pleasing. Not contradicting, not defrauding, but in all things showing good fidelity" (Titus ii. 9). " Whosoever are servants under the yoke, let them count their masters worthy of all honour" (1 Tim. vi. 1). These precepts were addressed, not indeed to hired servants, but to slaves ; but they apply equally to servants. Since the latter have agreed to accept those who employ them as their superiors, they of course owe them the duties of superiors. Though if they fail in this duty, it is often as much a sin against the seventh commandment as against the fourth ; for they defraud their employers by failing to fulfil their own part of the compact they have made with them.

Lastly, the duty of obedience to superiors does not cease because those superiors are bad men, so long as they do not call upon their subjects to do what is bad : " Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear ; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward" (1 Pet. ii. 18). And our Lord Himself taught this very distinctly to His disciples : " The Scribes and Pharisees have sitten on the chair of Moses. All therefore whatsoever they shall say to you, observe and do : but according to their works do ye not ; for they say, and do not" (Matt. xxiii. 1).

CHAP. LXI. Of the Duties of Parents to their Children.

It has been already said that by implication the fourth commandment speaks not only of the duties of children towards their parents, but also of parents towards their children ; and if of parents, so also of other superiors ; for these duties are reciprocal ; but the commandment specifies that which is more likely to be neglected. Since there is so strong a natural affection in parents for their children, that,

except in an artificial state of society, there does not seem any greater need of teaching parents this duty than there is of teaching brute creatures to take care of their young, as they do so of themselves.

All the duties which parents owe to their children arise from the obligation they are under to love them. This love, to be a true one, must not only be internal, but must manifest itself in their treatment of them. And as the children consist of body and soul, the external duties of parents may be divided into the proper treatment or education first of the body, and secondly of the soul. As to the first, parents are bound to provide their children with sufficient food for nourishment and growth, together with proper clothing and other necessities, to preserve them from bodily harm, to give them such an education as is fitting for the state of life that belongs to them, and to enable them, as far as they can, to get into the way of gaining a livelihood in some degree suitable to their condition: "If any man have not care of his own, and especially of those of his house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (1 Tim. v. 8). It is contrary to this duty for parents to refuse their children the means (when it depends on them) either to marry, or to enter religion, when called to do so; or indeed, to place any other obstacle in the way.

As to that education which regards the soul, parents are bound to provide for all that concerns the well-being of their children in the next world. Hence they are bound, as soon as possible, to have them regenerated by Baptism; to lead them to know and fear God as soon as they are old enough to understand about it. As for more special instruction in Christian doctrine, they are bound to see that their children have this, either through themselves or others, as *e.g.* by going to school; and not only that they know their religion, but that they practise it also. To this end they are bound to set them good example themselves, and to keep them out of the way of any bad example in others. Parents who commit any sin in presence of their children incur double guilt, because they are so likely to mislead them by their bad example. Lastly, parents are bound to correct their children for their faults. Holy Scripture is

especially strong on this point. God punished the high-priest Heli with such heavy judgments because his children committed great sins and he corrected them not (1 Kings iii. 13). "He who spares the rod spoils his son" (Proverbs xiii. 24). And St. Paul, while he warns parents against provoking their children or correcting them in anger, yet desires that they should be "brought up in the discipline and correction of the Lord" (Eph. vi. 4).

Lastly, not only parents have these duties towards their children, but all other superiors are bound to perform those duties which they owe to their subjects. These duties vary greatly in kind and degree, nor is it possible here to enumerate them. It is sufficient to say that all superiors, in proportion as they share in the position and authority which parents possess, are so far bound to the duties which belong to parents. Thus those who are set over others in temporal things are bound to regard the welfare of their subjects in temporal matters. Ecclesiastical superiors, on the other hand, are bound to see to their subjects in spiritual things. And those who have the entire charge of and authority over others are bound to perform all duties which are thus transferred to them from their parents. What these duties consist in has been already explained.

CHAP. LXII.

The Fifth Commandment: "Thou shalt not kill."

THIS commandment forbids :

1st. All wilful murder, or unjust taking away of our own or our neighbour's life, as well as every thought, word, or act—such as anger, quarrelling, hatred, or revenge—which tends to the same end.

2d. All spiritual murder, or leading others into sin, by scandal or bad example.

The object of the fifth commandment is to protect our lives and persons from violence. Murder is the only sin expressly mentioned; but every other species of unjust violence against a person, no less than every word or action which is likely to lead him into sin, and thus bring

about the spiritual death of the soul, is implicitly forbidden. In the first place, therefore, the fifth commandment forbids all wilful murder. 1. To kill another accidentally would not be a violation of this commandment, because it is not wilful. If, however, we are engaged in an occupation which may result in the loss of life, or any serious injury, we are strictly bound to take every reasonable precaution against such an event. Thus a person would commit a grievous sin by shooting across a public and frequented road, with the danger of killing or seriously wounding those who might happen to be passing. Thus also a doctor would be guilty of a grievous sin who, from gross ignorance of his profession, left a patient to die for want of the proper remedy, or who caused death by an improper one. 2. Where the act is wilful, there are three cases in which it is lawful to take the life of another. (1) In a just war. Kings and rulers of states have rights to maintain, for which they may have recourse to arms when all other means fail; and their subjects are not only justified, but are bound to assist their sovereign, in carrying on a just war. Practically speaking, the case will rarely happen in which a soldier is not bound to obey his sovereign, because whenever we are certain of the command of a lawful superior, and are not equally certain that the thing which is commanded is wrong, we are bound to obey. (2) In self-defence. If one nation may take up arms to defend its rights, or to resist the unjust encroachments of another, so may private persons, to defend their own lives, take the life of one who attacks them unjustly. This, of course, is understood to mean, whenever it is necessary to go to such an extreme; for if we are able to escape the danger which threatens us in any other way, we are not justified in taking the life of our enemy. (3) In the execution of a just sentence. In the same way as each one may defend himself when unjustly attacked, so may society defend itself against the crimes of any of its members. The well-being of a state, and the protection of its rights from acts of violence, are intrusted to its supreme ruler, and in the exercise of his authority he may punish, even with death, those who are guilty of very great crimes. For

though God alone is the Master of life and death, kings and rulers act as His ministers in the punishment of criminals. Hence it is lawful for any one who acts in the name of his sovereign, and with his sanction, to carry out the sentence of death ; but it would be wrong for him to execute the criminal on his own responsibility, even though he were certain of his crime, because those alone who exercise supreme dominion, or to whom special authority has been given, are the representatives of God in the execution of His justice.

With these three exceptions, it is not lawful for us to take away human life. Hence it would be wrong to put to death those who have become a burden to society,—who, for instance, are hopelessly mad, or mortally wounded, or who are reduced to such a state of infirmity or suffering that they are weary of existence. Hence, too, it would be wrong to kill persons in order to save them from torture or disgrace. It would be wrong also to put an innocent man to death to preserve the lives of many others, because we are never allowed to do evil that good may come out of it. We may, however, expose ourselves to the risk of death to obtain a great good. Thus, in a just war, a soldier may spring a mine in order to destroy the enemy, though he knew his own life would be lost in the explosion. Thus, too, in the exercise of charity towards the sick, persons may expose themselves to the evident danger of catching a mortal illness.

Secondly, this commandment not only forbids all wilful murder, but also every other act of violence unjustly offered to our persons ; and the sin is greater or less according to the amount of the injury which is intended, or to which a person is unjustly exposed. Thus duelling, fighting, quarrelling, and all acts expressive of hatred or desire of revenge, are strictly forbidden, and amount to a mortal sin, when the injury inflicted or the danger incurred is something serious. Nay, where the bodily injury is inconsiderable, the sin may still be grievous when committed against one to whom we owe a special reverence and respect. Thus it would generally be a mortal sin to strike a parent, or one placed high in authority.

Again, not only acts of violence, but all injurious words, and whatever is calculated to provoke anger, are forbidden. Our Blessed Saviour, who came not to destroy, but to fulfil the law, in teaching us to observe the commandments in their perfection, thus explains this commandment: "You have heard that it was said to them of old, Thou shalt not kill. And whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say to you, that whosoever is angry with his brother, shall be in danger of the judgment. And whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council. And whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire" (St. Matt. v. 21-23). Injurious words, then, so far as they are the manifestations of anger in us, or a provocation of anger or passion in others, are forbidden by the fifth commandment. If, in addition to this, they are the expression of bad wishes, which we call upon God to execute, they become curses, and are therefore forbidden by the second commandment; and if they are words of contumely, detraction, or calumny, they are also forbidden by the eighth commandment.

It is not enough to regulate our exterior actions according to the law of God, but we must banish all ill-will from our heart, and learn to love all mankind for God's sake. It is the heart principally which the Gospel teaches us to purify and cleanse from sin; for from the heart come forth the things which defile a man (St. Matt. xv. 18). "You have heard," says our Lord, "that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thy enemy. But I say to you, Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you." The obligations of charity have been already explained, and it has therefore only to be shown what is meant by anger, hatred, and revenge. Anger is a feeling of warmth and resentment which arises in our interior against those by whom we believe we have been injured. It is not always a sin; for St. Paul tells us to be "angry, and sin not" (Eph. iv. 26). This is clearly shown, as well as the extent to which justifiable anger may go, by the following illustration. Suppose we are reading a work of fiction which

describes the life of a wicked man, who inflicts all kinds of injury on others; we naturally experience feelings of resentment against such a one, and are pleased when he is brought to justice and punished for his crimes. Now if we examine this state of mind, we shall see that, so far from its being blamable, unless, of course, it be carried to excess, it is, on the contrary, praiseworthy, and springs in reality from our natural love of justice and our dislike of every thing which disturbs the course of justice. And if such be the case, where the narrative is purely fictitious, no one would condemn the same sort of feeling when every word of the story was true. If, then, it is quite right to entertain a certain degree of dislike against those who inflict injuries on others, it surely cannot be wrong to have the same amount of dislike when we ourselves are the sufferers. When, therefore, anger is spoken of as a sin, it is not meant that it is always sinful, but only when it is inordinate. The above reasoning clearly shows that we are justified in feeling that amount of resentment against those who have injured us, which a good man who was no way interested would naturally feel in reading the facts of the case. If, however, we allow ourselves to be carried beyond these bounds, we become more or less guilty in the sight of God. Thus it would be wrong to indulge resentment against one who accidentally, and without any wilful fault, had caused us a loss. Again, where the fault is real and undeniable, it would be wrong to desire to inflict a heavier punishment than it deserved, or to take the matter into our own hands, and, in defiance of law and reason, to set ourselves up as judges and executioners in our own case. Nay, even when we confine ourselves to the proper channels for obtaining redress, we are in great danger of offending against charity, unless we take special care to act simply with a view of maintaining our own rights, and not from any hatred of the person who has injured us. Hence, too, we may see that though a certain degree of resentment is justifiable in itself, it is very dangerous to indulge in it, because, when we are the sufferers, we are so easily carried away by our feelings beyond what is lawful.

Having given this full explanation of anger, a word or

two in addition will be sufficient to show us what is meant by hatred and revenge. Anger is a passing feeling of resentment for an injury which we have received; hatred, on the contrary, is a settled dislike of another, which is shown by inflicting injuries on him, by grieving at his prosperity or rejoicing at his reverses, or by refusing to speak to him, or by denying him all the customary marks of good-will. Revenge results from anger or hatred, and consists in returning evil for evil, and in inflicting injuries on those from whom we have received injuries. Anger, hatred, and revenge, are more or less grievous according to the amount of the evil which we desire or inflict on another. Where the evil is great, the sin is mortal; where it is small, the sin is only venial. But we must bear in mind that when we indulge in anger or hatred for any length of time, our acts of dislike and desires of revenge will be multiplied; and these repeated acts will constitute so many distinct sins, or at least the guilt will be equivalent to that of so many distinct sins.

CHAP. LXIII. Of Scandal.

WHAT has been said hitherto has been in reference to the sins, forbidden by the fifth commandment, which are directed against the life of the body. The next thing is to speak of such as are directed against the life of the soul. These sins are all included under the general word scandal. Scandal is frequently used in the same sense as slander or detraction, but in its primitive signification it meant a stumbling-block placed in the path of another to trip him up. In accordance with this latter meaning, it is here used to signify any word or action which, under the circumstances of the case, is naturally calculated to lead another into sin. So far as it tends to destroy the spiritual life of the soul, it is forbidden by the fifth commandment; but it almost always includes a double sin, one of which may be against any of the other commandments. There is, first, a sin against charity, which requires us to avoid whatever may be the occasion of spiritual ruin to another; and secondly,

there is a participation in the sin which our neighbour is led to commit. Thus, to persuade a man to steal would be a sin against the fifth and the seventh commandments; to persuade him to tell a lie would be a sin against both fifth and eighth commandments, and so in other cases.

There are two ways by which a person may be guilty of the sin of scandal. (1) By doing or saying something with the intention of leading another into sin, and (2) by doing or saying something which he has reason to believe will be an occasion of sin in another, though he has no intention or desire to induce him to commit sin. The former is called direct, and the latter indirect scandal. Thus a person would be guilty of direct scandal who commanded, counselled, or persuaded another to do any thing which he knew was wrong. He would be guilty of indirect scandal if he did something in the presence of others which was either wrong in itself, or had so far the appearance of evil that it was naturally calculated to lead them into sin. For instance, a boy might steal fruit in the presence of other boys simply to gratify his appetite, and without having any desire or intention of making them imitate his bad example, and yet he might be morally certain they would do so.

It has been implied already, that, in order to give scandal, and to be answerable for another's sin, it would be necessary to do something either wrong itself, or which has so far the appearance of evil, that it has a natural tendency to lead others into sin. The danger which is incurred, and the sin which is committed, will vary with circumstances. Thus, the very same word or action which would be an occasion of sin to one person, would not be so to another. However, we must bear in mind that the sin of giving scandal consists in doing or saying something which we have reason to believe will lead another into sin; and its guilt is incurred before that person has the chance of doing the evil to which he is tempted. Each one will be judged by his own actions, and not by the actions of others; but our own conduct in this respect is more or less sinful, as it is more or less likely to cause others to commit sin.

But it may be objected, that if others take occasion from our actions to do what is wrong, this proceeds entirely from the malice of their hearts, and consequently they are accountable for it. It is true, they who take scandal are always answerable for the sin which they knowingly commit, and if there be really nothing in our conduct to lead them into sin, they alone are answerable. Thus the Pharisees pretended to be shocked at the conduct of our Blessed Lord Himself, and of His disciples, and thus sought to justify their refusal to receive His doctrines; but as there was no real ground for scandal, they alone were guilty. Hence, this pretended scandal, which discovers evil where in reality no evil exists, is known as Pharisaical scandal. It is scandal taken, but not given; for we are only so far answerable for the sins of others, as our conduct is naturally calculated to cause them.

From what has been said we may easily infer that a person would be guilty of a mortal sin as often as he willfully exposed another to the danger of committing a great sin, and that there is a special malice in sins of scandal, on account of their special opposition to the goodness of God. Hence the strong language in which our Blessed Saviour denounces these sins: "He that shall scandalise one of the little ones that believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe to the world because of scandals. For it must needs be that scandals come; but nevertheless, woe to that man by whom the scandal cometh. And if thy hand or thy foot scandalise thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee. It is better for thee to go into life maimed or lame, than, having two hands or two feet, to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thy eye scandalise thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee. It is better for thee, having one eye, to enter into life, than, having two eyes, to be cast into hell-fire" (St. Matt. xviii. 6-9). However near or dear a thing may be to us, even though it be as necessary as our right hand or our right eye, we are commanded to cast it from us as soon as it becomes an occasion of sin.

CHAP. LXIV.

The Sixth Commandment: "Thou shalt not commit adultery."

NEXT to loss of life, unfaithfulness in a husband or wife is the greatest injury our neighbour can suffer: hence, to the prohibition against murder succeeds that against adultery.

Adultery is a carnal act committed with another's husband or wife. Its guilt, which is contracted by both persons concerned in it, is far greater than where neither person is married; for it adds to the sin of impurity a grievous breach of justice. In condemning this sin as an effect of lust, the commandment has always been understood to include all other sins which spring from the same source,—as the Catechism says, all kinds of immodesties by kisses, touches, looks, words, or actions.

God has bestowed on man, in common with the animals, certain bodily appetites, to the exercise of which are attached peculiar pleasures. Some are chiefly for the preservation of the individual, others for the continuation of the species. We are not, however, permitted to indulge as we please in such propensities, but are required to restrain them to the ends for which they were given. We may never pursue pleasure simply for its own sake. And as to eat and drink simply to please the palate is a sin against temperance,—although we may satisfy our appetite in order to promote sociability and cheerfulness of spirit, and refresh nature as well as to supply its strict needs,—so the gratification of other desires is a sin against purity, except under the sanction of the marriage tie, when such gratification is permitted for the sake of begetting children, and strengthening mutual affection.

The obligations of purity are most strict, and bind under the heaviest penalties, any deliberate violation of them being mortal sin; and this because of the degrading and absorbing character of lasciviousness. Its pleasure has a special tendency to subjugate the higher parts of our nature to the lower,—the reason to the appetite, the soul to the body. Impure objects most vividly impress themselves on the imagination, and inflame the desires, which powerfully draw after them the will, rendering it utterly

blind to reason, and incapable of choosing aright. In a short time the whole person becomes sensual, carnal, and on a level with the beasts that perish. Christianity supplies more weighty reasons still for regarding with abhorrence the sin of lust. For since the Incarnation our whole nature has been specially consecrated and raised to a divine excellence by union with the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity; so that its degradation to the mere animal is not only greater, but becomes a sort of sacrilege. By the Sacraments, and eminently by the Sacrament of the Altar, we are engrafted into Christ; we are made one with Him: we become members of His Body, of His flesh, and of His bones. Hence the Apostle speaks of sins of impurity not only as offences against one's own self, but as directly against Christ. "Fly fornication. Every sin that a man doth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I, then, take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? God forbid!" (1 Cor. vi. 18, 15). By no figure of speech, but in very truth, we are temples of the Holy Ghost who dwells in us: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? But if any man violate the temple of God, him shall God destroy" (1 Cor. iii. 16).

No wonder, then, we find sins against the Sixth Commandment so emphatically denounced in Holy Scripture, and especially in the New Testament. "Fornication, and all uncleanness or obscenity, let it not so much as be named among you, as becometh saints; for know this, and understand that no fornicator nor unclean person hath inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God" (Eph. v. 3-5). "Mortify your members which are upon earth, fornication, uncleanness, lust, evil concupiscence,—for which things the wrath of God cometh upon the children of unbelief" (Col. iii. 5, 6). "The works of the flesh are manifest, which are fornication, uncleanness, immodesty, luxury; of which I foretell you, as I have foretold you, that they who do such things shall not obtain the kingdom of God" (Gal. v. 19-21).

A characteristic of these sins is the shame which accompanies them. This feeling of shame and confusion is a good thing in itself, and intended to inspire us with a horror of sin, and a firm determination to avoid it; but it is sometimes perverted, and becomes an instrument for the ruin of the soul. When those who have unhappily fallen into any sins of impurity begin to reflect on what they have done, they are sometimes so filled with shame that they cannot bring themselves to confess their guilt, and so they cut themselves off from all hope of forgiveness. Bad confessions are more frequently owing to sins of impurity than to all other sins put together. So shameful are these sins, that the very shadow of them is sometimes enough to lead persons to make a series of bad confessions. They have perhaps only been tempted, and, in the sight of God, they are free from guilt; yet they are so frightened at the breath of sin, that they believe they have been guilty; yet, rather than explain their difficulty, they make a sacrilegious confession by wilfully omitting what they believe they are bound to declare. Bad as are all sins of impurity, they are made far worse when to their own deformity is added the guilt of sacrilege. Whenever, therefore, persons have reason to fear they have given way to any of these sins, unless they have been already assured their fears are groundless, they do well to make known their doubts to their confessor. If they are real sins, they ought to be confessed in order to be forgiven; if they are only temptations, one of the best preservatives against them is to declare them. The act of humiliation will bring upon the penitent the blessing of God,—will cover the tempter with shame, and enable the confessor to point out the suitable remedies. On the contrary, if these doubts be passed over in silence, there will often be danger of bad confessions, and at best the penitent will have little peace of mind from the constant fear and scruple that he has done wrong.

Notwithstanding the terrible punishments which have been inflicted on sins of impurity, and the shame which attends their guilt, these sins are very common, and very difficult to overcome when persons have once habituated

themselves to their commission. A habit of such sins, once contracted, too often accompanies a person to the grave. Segneri relates an instance which may be taken as an example of what sometimes happens, even among the better disposed. A certain person, he tells us, had frequently indulged in sinful thoughts, but still from time to time made his confession with sincere sorrow and repentance; yet he never continued for any length of time without relapsing into the same sins. When his last illness came, he made a good confession, and received the last Sacraments in pious dispositions; but as soon as the priest had left him, he was tempted to commit the sin to which he had been habituated during life. At first he rejected the thought immediately; it soon returned, and again he rejected it, but not till it had dwelt a few moments in his mind. It came a third time, and he took pleasure in it. He committed a grievous sin of thought, and died in his guilt. So terrible are the ravages of these sins, that spiritual writers tell us that the great majority of those who are lost owe their sufferings to this source.

CHAP. LXV. Remedies against Impurity.

THE one sovereign preservative against sins of impurity is to avoid with the greatest care whatever may be a subject of temptation. Some things may be a dangerous occasion to one person which are not to another; but whatever we have reason to believe, either from past experience or in any other way, is dangerous to us, we should shun as we should a venomous serpent. When we know, from the present state of our health or from the nature of our constitution, that we are liable to catch some deadly fever, we use every precaution we can, and do not consider whether others, who are differently constituted from ourselves, are bound to be at the same pains; so, if we have our spiritual welfare at heart, we shall not consider how others are bound to act, but we shall strive to keep at a distance from whatever is dangerous to ourselves. This is a warfare, says St. Philip Neri, in which cowards

are victorious, those, that is, who are most careful to keep at a distance from the enemy, and to shun the peril of an encounter. The senses are the avenues through which temptations enter the soul, and therefore we should exercise a strict guard over them, especially the eyes and the ears. "Gaze not upon a maiden," says Ecclesiasticus, "lest her beauty be a stumbling-block to thee. Look not round about thee in the ways of the city, nor wander up and down in the streets thereof. Turn away thy face from a woman dressed up, and gaze not about on another's beauty. For many have perished by the beauty of a woman, and hereby lust is enkindled as a fire" (Ecclus. ix. 5-9). Besides the danger pointed out in these words of inspired Scripture, it is necessary to guard the eyes from reading bad books, looking at immodest representations, whether they be plays, sculpture, or paintings, or gazing at any thing which may prove a subject of temptation. The ears likewise should be shut against dangerous discourses; and if it be necessary to avoid reading bad books, it is no less necessary to avoid listening when they are read by others. In a word, we must shun the company and conversation of all who are likely to be an occasion of sin to us.

But in spite of every precaution which we take, we cannot hope to be altogether free from temptation; and therefore, besides shunning the danger, we should learn how to resist, when, without any fault of ours, we are exposed to its attacks. If, then, we do not succeed in keeping the danger at a distance from us, we must manfully and courageously resist in the beginning, and banish the first suggestion as soon as we are able. These temptations may be compared to sparks of fire. If we cannot prevent the sparks falling on our clothes, we must dash them off immediately, otherwise we shall be in great danger of being burnt to death; so likewise, if we allow the sparks of temptation to dwell in the mind, we shall be burnt with the fire of concupiscence and sin, and this fire will be but the preparation for the unquenchable flames of another life. Whatever we find the most effectual and the most speedy way of banishing the evil suggestion,—no matter

whether it be the thought of some of the terrible truths of religion, or whether it be some temporal subject which engrosses our attention,—is for the time being our best remedy. As these temptations produce a powerful impression on the senses, whatever affects the senses in a contrary way will greatly help us to overcome them. Thus the thought of death, of judgment, of hell, or of the sufferings and Passion of our Lord, will be very advantageous for us at such times. Or, again, any thing which will arouse our shame,—such as the remembrance that we shall be obliged to confess the sin, or that God sees us and knows clearly the thoughts which are passing in our mind,—will be a good means of resisting temptations. It is also very important for us to bear in mind that when we have succeeded in banishing the evil suggestion, we should not, on any account, examine the past to see how far we have yielded; for doing so would almost be sure to bring back the temptation in a more dangerous shape, owing to the discouragement in which the soul is generally left on such occasions. We should content ourselves, therefore, with making a general act of sorrow for whatever fault or negligence there may have been on our part, and with renewing our confidence in God, and our resolution to do better another time.

Lastly, without mentioning many other remedies, those who are subject to temptations of impurity should remember that their only hope of perseverance in virtue lies in the powerful assistance of the grace of God. "As I knew that I could not otherwise be continent, except God gave it, I went to the Lord and besought Him with my whole heart" (Wisdom viii. 21). They should therefore make a diligent and constant use of the channels of Divine grace. They should pray fervently, not only during the continuance of temptation, but every day of their lives, in order to lay up a store of grace for the hour of need; and to prayer they should join the other great means of grace, the frequentation of the Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist.

CHAP. LXVI.

The Seventh Commandment: "Thou shalt not steal."

THE Catechism points out two kinds of sin forbidden by this commandment.

First. All unjust taking away or injuring what belongs to another.

Secondly. All unjust keeping of what belongs to another.

For the sake of clearness, it will be best to arrange the various sins of injustice under these two heads. Persons are guilty of unjustly taking away what belongs to another:

1. By all kinds of theft. By theft is meant taking away what belongs to another without a just cause. To commit this sin, therefore, it is necessary to take what *belongs* to another. Thus it would not be theft to make a man restore to the right owner a thing which he possessed unjustly. It is also necessary, to make it theft, that the thing should be taken away without a just cause; thus, it would be no sin to deprive a man against his will of a weapon, which we had good reason to believe he was going to use to inflict a serious injury on himself or his neighbour. The sin of theft varies in guilt according to the value of the thing stolen, or the amount of injury inflicted on another. Thus the sin would be mortal whenever the amount of the theft was something considerable, no matter whether the owner would miss it or not. And, again, the sin would be mortal where the value of the thing stolen is inconsiderable, if, owing to the poverty of the real owner, or any other circumstance, the thief knew it would cause him a serious injury. It is hardly necessary to add that these principles apply to all sins of injustice, in whatever way they are committed. Besides the ordinary kinds of theft which are committed secretly, there are others which are attended with circumstances that change the nature of the sin. Thus, if the thing stolen be something consecrated to the service of God, it is no longer a simple theft, but sacrilege. If it be taken away by open force, as in the case of house-

breaking or highway robbery, besides the loss of the thing stolen, there is the injury offered to our neighbour in his person or his property. And, generally speaking, these violent robberies are attended, in those who commit them, with a disposition of mind which will not stop at any amount of personal injury necessary to the execution of their unjust designs.

2. By fraud. There are a great variety of ways in which persons are guilty of sins of injustice by frauds: some of these shall be instanced as illustrations. Thus, under this head are included all kinds of cheating in buying or selling: passing off one thing for another,—for example, plated goods for real silver,—disposing of inferior articles as if they were of good quality, or of things which are damaged for such as are sound. Thus, again, short weights and measures, all kinds of adulteration or mixing a genuine article with imitations of inferior value, forgeries, using bad money, or obtaining money under false pretences, belong to this class of sins. Again, persons are often guilty of real fraud by taking what are generally known as perquisites; that is, by selling or keeping for their own use a number of small things which belong to their employers.—for example, tailors or dressmakers, who appropriate a part of the materials which are given them to make up. They have, of course, a perfect right to make the most of what their employers allow them to take; but if they keep any thing without the express or presumed consent of the owner, they are guilty of a real fraud. It is no justification to say that others act in the same way, for it is not lawful for us to do wrong when others set us the example. Nor can we presume, because one person has allowed us to make certain profits, we have therefore a right to use the same liberty with every body else.

3. By unjust lawsuits. Under this division is included all kind of injustice connected with an action at law. Thus, a judge would offend by receiving bribes, by wilfully causing unnecessary delay or expense, or by passing an unjust sentence. An advocate would sin by neglecting the interests of his client, by encouraging him to begin or continue a suit where there was no hope of success,

by causing delay, or by involving him in unnecessary costs. A witness would offend by inflicting a loss on another through giving false testimony, or concealing some part of the truth. Finally, all are more or less guilty who make use of the law to keep or obtain possession of what belongs to another, or who by vexatious lawsuits either keep them out of the possession of their due, or unjustly involve them in the expense of establishing their right.

4. By usury. By usury is meant interest exacted without any just or proper title. It is, of course, perfectly right for us, when we lend money or any other kind of property, to protect ourselves against a real or probable loss. (1) We may therefore receive interest as compensation when the loan occasions us a positive loss. If, for instance, we should be obliged to buy on credit the things which we required, and were consequently charged a higher price, we need not scruple to indemnify ourselves for the loss which we should hereby suffer. (2) We are justified in taking interest when the loan prevents us from making the profits which we should otherwise have realised. Suppose we have a sum of money which we are going to use in trade, with the prospect of gaining a certain return on our investment, but a friend persuades us to lend it to him instead, we may require him to pay us the profits which we reasonably expected to make. (3) We may receive interest when there is a risk of losing the principal. If, for instance, we were asked to lend money to one from whom we should perhaps never receive it back, there would be no harm in providing against the danger by receiving interest. (4) Where none of these reasons exist, it is now generally held that moderate interest, allowed by custom and the law of the country, may be received with a safe conscience till the Church decides the contrary. The rate of interest which we may lawfully receive will vary with the risk which we incur. But if it exceed a just and fair compensation, or if, where no such risk exists, it be more than is allowed by the general practice and the laws of the country in which we are living, we have no just claim to the excess.

5. By neglecting or performing badly a duty for which we are paid. They who agree with another to perform a certain work, or to spend a certain time in his service, are bound by the terms of their contract. If they neglect the duty which they have been hired to perform, or if they do not fulfil the conditions agreed upon, they offend against justice. Thus servants who idle away their time, or work for themselves when they ought to be working for their master, are guilty of an injustice. Thus, too, they who agree to execute any piece of work are guilty of injustice by using bad materials, or by not finishing the work as well as they stipulated.

6. Finally, persons sin against the seventh commandment by unjustly taking away what belongs to another, when they wilfully destroy another's property, or do any thing which they have reason to believe will cause a loss to him. For example, they who set fire to the possessions of another, or who cause their neighbour any loss by unjustly depriving him of his character and good name, are answerable for the loss which they inflict.

What has been hitherto said has reference to the different ways in which a person breaks the seventh commandment by unjustly taking away what belongs to another. We now come to the second class of sins forbidden by this commandment, viz. those which are committed by unjustly keeping what belongs to another. We render ourselves guilty of this class of sins :

1. By refusing to give back what we have taken from another, or that which has been intrusted to our keeping. The obligation of restitution will be spoken of a little later ; it will therefore suffice to state here, that when we obtain the possession of another's property, either unjustly, or because it has been lent to us, or left in our care for a time, we are bound to give it back when we are able, and the real owner requires it; and, consequently, by refusing to do so we commit a sin of injustice.

2. By refusing to pay our just debts. If we are indebted to others, either in the shape of wages for services which they have performed for us, or for goods which we have purchased, we are bound to pay our debts as soon as

they become due; and if by any unjust neglect or delay we inflict a loss on our creditors, we are also bound to make it good.

3. By not taking means to discover the owner of the things which we have found. When lost property has fallen into our hands, we are bound to use a reasonable diligence to discover the right owner; and so long as we neglect to do so, we are guilty of unjustly keeping what belongs to another.

4. By buying or receiving things which we have reason to believe have been stolen. No one but the real owner has the right to dispose of what belongs to him; and when we receive or buy any thing from one who has no right to sell it or give it away, we become a partaker in his injustice.

CHAP. LXVII. On Restitution.

THE seventh commandment not only forbids us to commit acts of injustice against our neighbour, but commands us to give unto every one what belongs to him. To understand the exact nature of this command, we must consider how far it binds, first, those whom it affects separately and apart from any coöperation with others, and secondly, those whom it affects conjointly with others, who have been accomplices in the same act of injustice.

I. And first let us consider the former of these two cases.

A person may have obtained the possession of what belongs to another without any dishonesty; for instance, it may have been given to him by mistake, or he may have taken it because he thought it belonged to him. Or again, he may have come by it dishonestly; for example, he may have stolen it, or received it from one whom he knew had no right to it. Or thirdly, he may be under the obligation of restitution, because he has destroyed or injured the property of another. In the first case, as soon as he discovers that he is possessed of something which is not his own, he is bound to take steps to find out the real owner, and to have the thing given back. He is not, how-

ever, bound to compensate the real owner for the loss which he has sustained during the time he was deprived of his property. On the contrary, he has a right to claim repayment of the expenses incurred in taking care of the thing and in restoring it. But in the second case, viz. where the possession of the property has been acquired unjustly, he is not only bound to restore it at his own cost, but he is also obliged to make good any loss he has caused the right owner by the injustice of which he has been guilty. In the third case, viz. where the obligation of restitution arises from the injury which has been inflicted on the property of another, the following principle will tell us how we should act. Where there has been no sin of injustice, there is no obligation of restitution; and where the sin is only venial, the obligation is not binding under grievous sin. Hence it will be seen a person is not bound to make good a loss of which he has been the innocent cause. If, for instance, he has accidentally set fire to a house, it is his duty to do all he can to extinguish it; but he is not obliged to repair the damage caused by the fire. Again, where there has been a real act of injustice, but the offender could not have foreseen the serious consequences of his act, or the extent of the injury which he has inflicted, he is only so far bound as his guilt extends, or, in other words, he is only answerable for such consequences as he could foresee. Suppose, for instance, some one out of revenge throws a book belonging to another into the fire, he would be bound to pay him the value of the book; but if it should happen that the book contained a five-pound note, of which the person who destroyed it had no suspicion, he would not be answerable for this additional loss. These observations are made simply in reference to the obligation of conscience, and are quite independent of what the civil law might enforce; but if the case be brought before a civil tribunal, its decision must be respected.

II. If the act of injustice, from which the obligation of restitution arises, be the joint effect of a number of persons acting in concert, the following rules should be observed:

1. He who possesses the thing which has been stolen, or its equivalent,—for example, the price at which it has been sold,—is bound before all others to make the restitution, and the rest of the accomplices are only bound in case he neglects his obligation. If the stolen property has been divided among the accomplices, each one is bound in the first place to give back to the right owner the part he has received; and in case the others refuse to make restitution, he is bound to make good the whole loss.

2. If the person or persons who have secured to themselves the whole advantage of the theft refuse to make restitution, or if there has been simply an unjust destruction of property,—what obligation falls on the accomplices? If they have had an equal share in the injury which they have inflicted, they are all bound to an equal share of the restitution; and in case any of them is unable or unwilling to do his part, the rest are bound to do it for him. If, however, they have acted under the guidance of some one who has planned the whole affair, or who has got the accomplices together, and by command, counsel, or persuasion has caused them to commit the act of injustice, the whole obligation of restitution falls in the first place on him alone, because the whole amount of the injustice is due to him. But if he be unable or unwilling to repair the injury, the obligation rests with his subordinates according to the share which they have had in inflicting it, and, in default of their accomplices, each one is bound to make good the entire loss. If any one of the accomplices who is bound to restitution, either in default of or along with the rest, restores the full amount, they are no longer under any obligation towards the person who was originally injured, but they will have to compensate the person who has repaired the injustice in which they were partakers. To make these principles more clear, we will take an illustration which embodies most of them. Suppose A, by command, counsel, or persuasion, induces B, C, and D to steal a sum of money belonging to W. With the assistance of C and D, B secures all the money and uses it for his own benefit. Which of them is bound to make the restitution? In the first place, B is bound to

restore the whole amount, because he has possession of the stolen property. Secondly, if B fail in his duty, the obligation rests with A, who is also, in default of B, bound to give back the full amount of the theft, because he has been the unjust cause of the whole injury sustained by W. Thirdly, in case both B and A refuse to make restitution, the obligation falls equally on C and D; and if either of them be unable or unwilling to do his part, the other is bound to restore the whole. Now let us suppose D makes full compensation for the injury which has been inflicted, the other accomplices are no longer under any obligation to W; but B is still bound to give back the full amount to D, and in default of B doing so, the entire obligation falls on A, and if both B and A neglect their obligation, C is bound to pay D half the amount of the theft.

The sins which have been spoken of in explaining the previous commandments are forgiven us when we repent; but with regard to sins of injustice, it is not enough for us to be sorry for them, to confess them, and to resolve never again to commit them; but in addition to all this, we must make restitution, and repair the injury which we have caused, as far as we are able, otherwise the sin will not be forgiven. Provided we are fully resolved to make compensation for the injustice of which we have been guilty, we may receive absolution before the restitution has been actually made; but for greater security a confessor will often judge it most suitable to defer absolution till the penitent has actually fulfilled his intention of giving back his ill-gotten goods.

We have now to consider what causes will exempt a person from the obligation of making restitution.

1. A real or moral impossibility. No one can be obliged to do more than he is able, and therefore when a person has not the means of repairing the injustice or of which he has been guilty, it is enough for him to have a sincere desire and intention of doing so as soon as he is able. The same rule also holds good when the restitution cannot be made without incurring some great danger or inconvenience over and above the loss of the property which is possessed unjustly. If, for instance, the resti-

tution would entail a heavier loss—without, of course, counting the value of the thing stolen—than has been inflicted, it is generally considered a sufficient ground for exemption for the time being. If, however, a person possesses the means of making restitution, the prudent counsel of a friend or of his confessor will generally discover a way in which it may be done. By way of illustration, it may be well to add one or two cases of more frequent occurrence. Suppose a person has inflicted some injustice on his neighbour which he cannot repair without losing his character, he may often find out something of the same value which his neighbour requires; let him, therefore, send it to him as a present. Again, a shopkeeper has for some time given short weight or measure; in case the same customers continue to deal with him, he may easily make restitution by allowing them a little more than just weight. Or, again, a servant has idled away the time which he ought to have employed in the service of his master; let him use greater diligence in future, and prolong his labours each day a little beyond the time he is bound to. It will of course be understood that when a person has not the means of making full compensation, he is bound to do as much as he can; or when he is unable at one time to make restitution, either wholly or in part, he is bound to do so afterwards, if it should be in his power.

2. The obligation of restitution no longer exists if the real owner is willing to give up his claim. If he expressly declares that he does not require satisfaction to be made, no doubt can exist on the subject; but where he has given no such assurance, we may still sometimes presume that he has remitted the debt of restitution. Thus, for example, children who have taken small things from their parents for their own use are generally not required to make restitution.

3. The obligation of restitution ceases when compensation has been made to the injured party. Thus if a person has stolen from one, who is indebted to him in any way to the same amount as the theft, one obligation will cancel the other.

CHAP. LXVIII. Eighth Commandment : "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour."

IN the first table of the law, two of the commandments instruct us how we are to honour God by our actions, and there is a special commandment to teach us how we are to honour God by our words, and to point out the sins of the tongue by which He is offended. So likewise in the second table of the law, which refers to our duty towards our neighbour, the commandments which have been already explained belong principally to the regulation of our actions, while the eighth commandment regulates our words, and the tenth our thoughts, in our dealings with our neighbour.

The sins against the eighth commandment may be classified as follows :

1. False testimony. Under this name may be understood all the sins against this commandment; but it is here used in a limited sense, as restricted to false evidence given in a court of justice. This is a grievous sin, 1st, because it is a violation of truth; 2dly, because it is a violation of an oath, and, as such, is also forbidden by the second commandment; and 3dly, because if it be the cause of an injury to another, it is a violation of justice. Even when false evidence is given in favour of one who is unjustly accused, it is still a mortal sin, because it is a grievous affront to God to call him to witness to a lie.

2. Rash judgment. The sin of rash judgment consists in entertaining an unfavourable opinion of another without sufficient grounds. Two things, therefore, are implied in the guilt of this sin : 1st, that the matter of the judgment is something prejudicial to our neighbour, or, in other words, that the opinion which is formed respecting him lessens his reputation in our mind; 2d, that the judgment is made without a reasonable foundation, and in this consists its rashness. It is not a sin to have a bad opinion of another when we know that our opinion is correct. Thus, it would be no sin to doubt a man's word, if we knew that he often told lies. It would be no sin to believe a man dishonest, if we caught him in the act of committing some

theft. Whether we afterwards prove to be right or wrong in the unfavourable suspicion or judgment which we form, if at the time we have no sufficient grounds, we are guilty of rash judgment. For example, a theft has been committed, and without any evidence we suspect some particular person. No matter whether we happen to be right or wrong, we have committed a sin, by unjustly depriving that person of the good opinion which we are bound to have of him, until he has lost his right to it by some clear crime. The guilt of rash judgment varies according to the greatness of the injury which is inflicted on the character of a neighbour, and the insufficiency of the motives on which it is grounded. If there be a fixed unhesitating judgment, it must rest on clear and adequate evidence. If there be merely a suspicion, or an opinion as to another's guilt, there must be at least a presumptive evidence, or appearance of guilt, otherwise we cannot be excused in forming an unfavourable judgment of him. Rash judgment is opposed to charity, which thinketh no evil, and commands us to do unto others as we would have them do unto us. It is also opposed to justice, because it robs our neighbour of that good opinion to which he has a right, until he has forfeited it by some clear crime. If the bad opinion or suspicion we have formed in our mind be manifested to others, it is no longer rash judgment merely, but it partakes of the malice of calumny, because there is at least a danger of destroying another's character by a false imputation.

3. All kinds of lies. The essence of a lie is the intention to deceive. Persons are guilty of this sin as often as they state any thing which they believe to be false, with the intention of deceiving those to whom they speak. A man may say what is perfectly true and yet tell a lie, because he has the intention of deceiving; or he may state what is false and yet not tell a lie, because he has no such intention. Suppose a person tried to deceive another by telling him he should go to London the next day without having any intention of doing so, he would have told a lie, even though something should afterwards induce him to undertake the journey. On the contrary, he would

not have told a lie had he denied he was going. Nay, circumstances may give quite a different meaning to the same question, so that the very same answer might be perfectly true in one case and false in another. Suppose, for example, a servant is looking for his master, and says to a fellow-servant, "Have you seen our master?" The answer might be, "No." And yet both would be well aware that he had really seen his master a hundred times; but his meaning is, that he has not seen him lately. The very same reply might convey a totally different meaning, if addressed to a stranger.

A lie told in jest is called a jocose lie. A lie told in order to escape some evil, or to obtain some good, is what is meant by an officious lie. Both these kinds of untruths, which are sometimes called white lies, are always wrong, though their guilt never exceeds a venial sin. A lie which is told to cause any harm or mischief is called a malicious or hurtful lie, and is a mortal or venial sin according as the injury which it inflicts is great or small.

4. Calumny. By calumny we mean the propagation of false accusations against our neighbour. This sin is committed by making statements against another's character which we believe to be false or doubtful, and by exaggerating what is true; for all that is spoken beyond the known truth to the detriment of another is so far calumnious. It is opposed no less to truth than to charity, which commands us to do unto others as we would have them do unto us. And it is also opposed to justice; for it robs our neighbour of his good name, which is more precious than great riches.

5. Detraction. This sin consists in injuring our neighbour's character, by making known without a sufficient cause his real but secret faults. If we reproach a person with his faults before his face, this is called contumely; but to speak of them in his absence is called backbiting. When we have done any thing which is calculated to lessen the good opinion which others have of us, we do not like to hear it thrown in our face, or to know that every body talks about it. If, therefore, we love our

neighbour as ourselves, we should be careful of his reputation, as we are of our own. However rigidly, therefore, we confine ourselves within the limits of truth, we sin by needlessly making known the faults of our neighbour. There may be circumstances in which it is right, and even necessary, to speak of another's failings to those whose duty it is to correct them; but we are bound to observe silence, unless we have a solid reason for believing that some good will result from what we say, which will compensate for the loss of character in the person against whom we speak. Thus, if we know of some one whose influence is likely to prove injurious to others, we may warn them of their danger, or make the circumstances known to a superior. But where no such excuse exists, or where no evident good is to be gained, we do wrong to speak of the faults of others. Thus it is wrong to make known the faults of a companion to those who are not likely to be affected by them, or who have no authority to correct them. It is wrong to carry tales backward and forward, and thus to sow the seeds of discord and disunion, and to destroy brotherly love and charity. It is wrong even to speak to a superior if we are prompted by any uncharitable selfish motive. Thus, we should commit sin if, to gain the praise and esteem of a superior, we carried tales to him about the failings of our companions.

But if it be sinful to destroy the character of another by calumny or detraction, it must also be sinful to listen with pleasure to the evil which is spoken. It is commonly said, that the receiver is as bad as the thief; and if this be true in case of ordinary theft, it is no less true when one seeks to rob his neighbours of their good name by detracting words. If there were no listeners, there would be no detractors. What, then, should a person do who is present when words of detraction are spoken? If he be in the position of a superior, he is bound to silence the detractor; if he be an equal or inferior, he should endeavour to change the subject of the conversation; if the detraction still continue, he should make known his displeasure at least by silence, and carefully avoid every thing which could be construed into encouragement of what was said;

finally, if all these means are unavailing, he should, if possible, leave the company.

It has been already stated, in treating of the seventh commandment, that when false testimony, calumny, or detraction causes any loss to our neighbour in his goods, we are bound to make him restitution; but our duty towards him does not stop here. We are also bound to make satisfaction for the injury inflicted on his character. Thus, he who has deprived another of the honour which is due to him by the disrespect and contempt which he has shown in his presence, is bound to beg pardon, or in some other way to repair the affront. In case the offence has been public, the reparation must be equally public. He who has robbed another of his good name by calumny is bound to retract what he has said, even at the risk of injuring his own reputation; because it is not just that the innocent should suffer, in order to screen the guilty. He who has taken away the fair fame of another, by making known his real faults, cannot contradict what he has said, because it is never lawful to tell a lie; but he is bound to do all in his power to counteract the mischief which he has done, and to reinstate the injured person in the good opinion of his neighbours. Great prudence, however, is necessary in cases of this kind, as there is sometimes danger of causing a greater injury while imprudently seeking to repair what is past. If, for instance, the detraction has been partially or entirely forgotten, to revive the recollection of it would generally be more likely to do harm than good.

CHAP. LXIX.

Ninth and Tenth Commandments: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods."

HUMAN laws can only reach external actions, because the secrets of hearts are hidden from human tribunals; but God, who knows our inmost thoughts, is not content with a virtuous exterior, but He requires us to regulate our thoughts, our desires, and our intentions according to the dictates of conscience. Whatever it is unlawful for us

to do, it is wrong to desire or deliberately to think of with pleasure. All the commandments, therefore, may be broken by sins of thought; but God has expressly forbidden sins of thought contrary to chastity and justice, not only because these sins are generally more common and more grievous than sins of thought opposed to other virtues, but also because they lie at the root of all other sins. The reason why persons are tempted to do wrong is not from any love of vice as such, but because they promise themselves some pleasure or gain in doing what their conscience, or the law of God, forbids. If, therefore, mankind could be deterred from indulging in sinful pleasures, and from seeking unlawful gain, the sources of temptation would be dried up. Now it is the object of the ninth commandment to check all desire of unlawful pleasure, and of the tenth to check all desire of unlawful gain.

The great difficulty in explaining sins of thought is to distinguish between what is only a temptation and what is really sinful. Sin consists not in being tempted, but in wilfully consenting to the temptation. But it is often difficult to determine how far there has been any consent of the will. To explain this, theologians distinguish three several states of the mind: the first is the simple suggestion of a forbidden pleasure; the second, the delight which follows this first thought; and the third is the consent of the will choosing that pleasure, notwithstanding that it is forbidden. An example will perhaps make this more clear. A boy sees some fruit in a garden, and the temptation comes into his mind to steal it. This is what is called simple suggestion; and as the will has no part in it, there can be no sin. Next follows the consideration or representation of the pleasure which will be derived from the possession of the fruit, and by which the will is enticed and led on to desire and to take steps to obtain it. As yet there has been no absolute choice of the will. There may have been some neglect of duty in not promptly rejecting the first appearance of evil,—some wavering or beginning of consent,—but there has been no determination or positive desire to do what is wrong. This stage

of the temptation is therefore generally accompanied with venial sin; but so long as full consent is wanting, there cannot be mortal sin. Lastly, the delight which will attend the enjoyment of the forbidden pleasure being represented by the imagination, the will cleaves to it and desires its possession; and this is what we mean by consent, which completes the sin.

Another way of explaining what is meant by consent to sins of thought will be made clear by the following illustration. Suppose we are a good deal thrown into the company of one whom we very much dislike. He has perhaps been very harsh and unkind to us, he has inflicted a great injury on us, or he has a disagreeable manner which we cannot bear. In our intercourse with such a one we shall naturally have uncharitable feelings, and find it difficult to think and behave towards him in the same way that we do towards every body else. And though we strive to overcome our prejudice, we may often be in doubt how far we have been wanting in charity. Now we cannot repeat too often, sin does not consist in having uncharitable thoughts or feelings, but in giving way to them, or in wilfully keeping them in our mind when we might be rid of them. The thought and the feeling often come in spite of ourselves, and we cannot always banish them as soon as we wish. When we are low-spirited, we cannot at once feel happy simply by desiring it. So, in like manner, when we feel uncharitable towards another, we cannot at once feel kindly towards him, however much we wish it. When, therefore, we have bad thoughts, by consent to them we mean such a state of the will as would be correctly expressed by saying, If I had the power of banishing these thoughts at once, I would not use it; or, If I could at once entirely rid myself of this temptation, I should be unwilling to deprive myself of the pleasure which I experience in its continuance.

Sins of thought are of two kinds: 1st, a person may dwell with pleasure on what is wrong, without having any desire or intention of committing the sin by an external act; or 2dly, when the temptation comes, he may form an intention or desire of committing the sin. The main dif-

ference between sins of thought and sins of desire is, that the former represent the sinful object as past or present in the imagination, and feed the mind on the guilty thought, while the latter represent the sinful object as future, and seek after its enjoyment. Sins of thought and desire are of the same kind as the corresponding actions, and are mortal sins where the corresponding actions would be grievous sins, provided, of course, there be full knowledge of their malice and full consent of the will. Temptations in which the will has no part are not sinful, however long they continue, or however revolting they may be.

It is not a sin to desire what belongs to another, if we seek its possession by lawful means and for a good end. It would not be wrong, for instance, to desire to purchase a house, or a piece of land, to which we had taken a fancy. The desires which God forbids us to entertain are those which cannot lawfully be gratified. Thus, we are forbidden to covet that which we can only possess by some unjust means. We are forbidden to desire the death of a relative, in order that we may inherit his property, or of a successful rival, in order that we may succeed to his place. We are forbidden to set our hearts on riches so as to neglect other duties in their pursuit; for instance, alms-giving, the frequentation of the Sacraments, or the performance of any other religious obligation. Finally, we are forbidden to seek riches for any bad end; for instance, that we may have the means of gratifying our passions, and indulging in sinful pleasures.

CHAP. LXX. The Commandments of the Church in general.

In the explanation of the ninth article of the Creed, it has been shown that Jesus Christ established the Church to continue His work upon earth. He gave her the same commission which He Himself had received from His Father (St. John xx. 21). He intrusted her with the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and promised to ratify in heaven whatever she should bind or loose upon earth (St. Matt. xvi. 19). He commanded the faithful to regard those who

refused to obey her as heathens and publicans: "If thy brother shall offend against thee, go and rebuke him between thee and him alone. And if he will not hear thee, take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may stand. And if he will not hear them, tell the Church. And if he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican" (St. Matt. xviii. 15-17). He assured the pastors of the Church, that the disobedience and disrespect shown to them was the same crime as though it were shown to Himself: "He that heareth you heareth Me; and he that despiseth you despiseth Me" (St. Luke x. 16). It is clear, therefore, that the Church has received power and authority to make laws and precepts which are binding on the consciences of her children; and to transgress her commands is as much a sin as to transgress any of the Ten Commandments, which have been already explained. This authority of the Church is derived immediately from God, and consequently is independent of any other authority. Hence St. Paul, addressing the clergy of Ephesus, says, "Take heed to yourselves, and to the whole flock, wherein *the Holy Ghost hath placed you Bishops, to rule the Church of God*" (Acts xx. 28). Hence, in the exercise of their power, the Apostles made laws binding on the faithful without consulting the civil rulers, and they claimed for their ordinances a divine authority. "It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us to lay no farther burden upon you than these necessary things, that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled" (Acts xv. 28, 29). Hence we read that St. Paul "went through Syria and Cilicia confirming the Churches, commanding them to keep the precepts of the Apostles and the ancients" (Acts xv. 41).

As a parent has a right, by commanding his child to do one thing or avoid another, to impose an obligation where none existed before, so that the very same action which would otherwise have been harmless becomes sinful by its opposition to a lawful command, so in like manner the Church can impose on her members precepts which are binding on their consciences. But in the exercise of her

authority she is guided by the Divine Spirit who rules and governs her; and the obligations which she imposes are rather the determination of the time and manner of observing the precepts of our Lord than any new restrictions on the liberty of her children. Thus we are commanded by God to serve and worship Him; and the Church fixes the days, and instructs us in the manner in which we are to fulfil this duty. The sacred Scripture frequently inculcates the necessity of fasting and abstinence, as well as acts of mortification generally; and the Church appoints the days, and lays down rules for fasting and abstinence. The very institution of the Sacraments of Penance and the Blessed Eucharist implies an obligation to receive them; and the Church commands her children to fulfil this duty at least once a year.

There is, therefore, the closest connexion between the commandments of God and the commandments of the Church. In one respect, however, there is an important difference. The Ten Commandments, for the most part, enjoin duties which are obligatory in their own nature, and forbid things which are in themselves sinful independently of any positive law; while the precepts of the Church, as such, impose obligations which are dependent on positive law. If a person commits murder, or robs his neighbour, or takes away another's character unjustly, he does what is wrong in itself; but if he eats meat on a Friday, or performs unnecessary servile work, or omits Mass on a Sunday, he commits a sin, not because he does any thing wrong in itself, but because he disobeys a lawful command. Meat is as good on one day as on another, so is servile work as innocent on one day as on another, if we leave out of consideration the command of a lawful superior; but we should do wrong by eating meat on a Friday, or performing unnecessary servile work on a Sunday, because we should be guilty of an act of disobedience against the command of the Church. Again, as the sin in these cases consists in the act of disobedience, where there is no disobedience there is no sin. Thus the authority of the Church, which imposes the obligation, may relax or entirely take it away. If, for instance, the Church dispenses certain per-

sons, or if circumstances arise in which she does not intend that her precepts should bind, there would no longer be any sin in doing what under ordinary circumstances is forbidden. The authority of the Church over the body of the faithful may be compared to the authority of a parent over his children. A father may lay down a rule for his children to go to school every day, and if they refuse to do so, they are guilty of disobedience; but he might relax this rule, or he might not wish it to apply to wet days or times of sickness; so in like manner the Church imposes her commands; but she still retains the power of modifying them, as often as circumstances render it expedient. She may dispense with her own laws, but she cannot change the law of God. Thus she may exempt invalids from the obligation of fasting or abstinence, or from hearing Mass on Sundays; but she cannot, in any case or under any circumstances, allow a person to tell a lie or to deny an article of faith. This will explain what is meant by the phrase which we often hear that the doctrine of the Church is always one and the same, while her discipline may vary. By the doctrine of the Church we understand the revelation or teaching which she has received from God, and of which she is the divinely appointed guardian and interpreter; by her discipline we mean those rules and laws which she has received power to frame for the government of the faithful dispersed throughout the world. The truth of God, it is evident, is one and the same at all times, in all places, and under all circumstances; but the regulations which are best adapted to the wants of different times or countries may vary.

CHAP. LXXI.

On the First and Second Commandments of the Church.

THERE is a great variety of laws and regulations laid down by the Church for the different classes of her subjects, but six are specially enumerated by the Catechism, as applying to the general body of the faithful. Hence they are spoken of, not as all, but as the chief commandments of the Church.

The first and second commandments of the Church are: to keep certain days holy, with the obligation of resting from servile work, and to hear Mass on all Sundays and holy days of obligation.

If we examine the calendar of the Church, we shall find that almost every day in the year is dedicated to the honour of one or more of the saints, or to the commemoration of one or other of the mysteries of religion. Some of these days are marked as holy days of obligation, others as days of devotion; while the rest have nothing particular to distinguish them. By holy days of obligation we mean those great festivals which, though they may fall on a week-day, we are commanded to observe in the same way that we keep the Sunday. Just as in the old law God commanded His chosen people to preserve the memory of the great benefits which He had conferred upon them by the yearly festivals in honour of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage, of the giving of the law, and of other great mercies which He had shown them; so the Christian Church commemorates in her great annual festivals the far higher benefits, for which we owe Him our gratitude under the new law.

The festivals which we are now commanded to observe as holy days of obligation in England are: (1) New-Year's day, or the Feast of the Circumcision; (2) the Epiphany, or the manifestation of our Lord to the Gentiles in the persons of the Magi; (3) the Ascension of our Lord into Heaven; (4) Corpus Christi, or the festival in honour of the real Presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament; (5) the Feast of SS. Peter and Paul; (6) the Assumption of our Blessed Lady; (7) the Festival of All Saints; and lastly, Christmas Day, or the birth of our Lord. Formerly the holy days of obligation were more numerous; but as it became very difficult for the great body of the faithful to observe them, their number was reduced to the eight just enumerated. But in order to induce those who have leisure and opportunity to sanctify the feasts which were formerly of obligation, by hearing Mass and other acts of piety, they are distinguished as days of devotion. That is to say, the obligation of keeping these days holy in the

same way that we keep the Sunday holy is removed, but all who are able are strongly recommended on these days, as a matter of devotion, to approach the Sacraments, to assist at Mass, or at least to say some extra prayers. This seems to have been the origin of feasts of devotion. At all events, most of the festivals which are marked as days of devotion were formerly holy days of obligation. As the duty of hearing Mass and abstaining from servile work, as well as other questions connected with the sanctification of Sundays and festivals, have been already explained in the third commandment, it will only be necessary to observe here that dispensations from the obligation of hearing Mass, or of resting from servile work, are much more frequent with regard to holy days of obligation than Sundays, because the reasons on which such dispensations are grounded more frequently occur on week-days than on Sundays.

CHAP. LXXII.

The Third Commandment of the Church: To keep the days of fasting and abstinence appointed by the Church.

ABSTINENCE and fasting are often confounded in the popular mind, but there is a clear distinction between them. Abstinence implies a restriction as to the quality of food; fasting implies a restriction both as to quality and quantity. On abstinence-days we are allowed to take our usual number of meals, but are forbidden the use of certain kinds of food. On fasting-days we are not only restricted as to the quality of food which we are permitted to use, but we are also forbidden to take more than one full meal.

According to the present discipline of the Church, the law of abstinence as applied to days out of Lent simply forbids all kinds of flesh-meat. During a part of Lent the prohibition is more extensive, as shall be explained later on, in giving the Lenten regulations regarding both fasting and abstinence which are now in force in England. On abstinence-days, therefore, we are strictly forbidden to

eat flesh-meat, or any thing which is made up with flesh-meat; but, by a recent rescript of our Holy Father Pius IX., the use of lard and dripping is permitted on all days throughout the year except Good Friday. The essence of the precept of abstinence consists in the prohibition of certain kinds of food; the essence of fasting consists in taking but one meal, and that not before mid-day. The abstinence is broken as often as a person partakes of prohibited meats on an abstinence-day. He may therefore sin against the abstinence several times on the same day. The precept of fasting, on the contrary, cannot be broken more than once on the same day.

Nothing is more clear than that fasting and abstinence are both inculcated in Holy Scripture. The earliest command of which we read was one of abstinence. Adam was allowed to partake of the fruit of all the trees of Paradise except one, from which he was commanded under pain of death to abstain (Gen. ii. 16, 17). Again, immediately after the flood Noe was commanded by God to abstain from flesh with blood (Gen. ix. 4). In the Levitical law the Jews were commanded to abstain from the flesh of divers kinds of animals (Levit. xi.). When the angel foretold the birth of Samson, he commanded his mother to drink no wine nor strong drink, nor to eat of any thing unclean (Judges xiii. 4). We see, therefore, that the precept of abstinence held a conspicuous place among the ordinances which God delivered to His people under the old law. In the new law, too, it is remarkable that of the few precepts which are recorded in the New Testament not belonging to the moral law, the most prominent is one of abstinence: "It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us to lay no further burden upon you than these necessary things, that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled," &c. (Acts xv. 29).

So strictly were the laws of abstinence observed, that during the Babylonian captivity Daniel and his three companions lived on pulse and water, rather than defile themselves with the forbidden meats which came from the king's table; and God so blessed their obedience to His

command, that "their faces appeared fairer and fatter than all the children that eat of the king's meat" (Dan. i.). Still more remarkable was the constancy of Eleazar and the seven Machabees, who chose rather to lay down their lives than to eat of the forbidden meats (2 Mach. vi. vii.). The particular forms in which the law of abstinence is enforced, in these and other instances recorded in sacred Scripture, are now no longer obligatory; still it is obvious that the same principle is implied in these cases as in the precept of abstinence imposed by the Church; and the objections which non-Catholics have made against the Church on this point are no less applicable to the commands which God Himself has given. But the difficulty will altogether disappear if we bear in mind that the sin in these cases consists in disobeying the commands of a lawful authority, and not in doing any thing intrinsically wrong. It would, indeed, be superstitious and sinful to believe that any kind of meat is in itself unclean, or defiles the soul more than another, or that it is more lawful to take it on one day than on another; but this is a very different thing from believing that a person is defiled and guilty before God by violating the commands of a lawful superior.

It is therefore clear that the precept of abstinence, or the prohibition of certain kinds of food, has been enforced both under the old and the new law. The days on which abstinence is commanded may vary at different times and in different countries. Formerly Wednesday was observed as a day of abstinence, because on that day the sorrows and sufferings of our Lord's Passion commenced. Saturday also was at one time generally kept, and is so to this day in some countries, as an abstinence-day in honour of our Lord's burial, and as a preparation for the due observance of the Sunday. Friday, however, in memory of the crucifixion and death of Christ, has always been considered the most appropriate day for the practice of penance and mortification. For a long time it was observed as a rigorous fast, and is still kept throughout the Church as a day of abstinence. According to the present discipline of the Church, we are required to abstain on all Fridays

throughout the year, "except the Friday on which Christmas Day may fall, and on the Sundays in Lent, unless leave be given to eat meat on them." Those who, by reason of their age, or for any other cause, are not bound to fast, are yet required, unless they are otherwise dispensed, to abstain on all fasting-days during the year on which flesh-meat is not allowed.

CHAP. LXXIII. On Fasting.

FASTING is more frequently inculcated in Holy Scripture than abstinence, and it has been more diligently practised by the servants of God. Thus fasting is commanded as a part of the penance we should perform for our sins: "Be converted to Me," saith the Lord, "with all your heart *in fasting*, and in weeping, and in mourning" (Joel ii. 12). Our Blessed Lord Himself foretold that His disciples would fast after His departure from them: "The days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then they shall fast" (St. Matt. ix. 15). He also lays down rules which we should observe when we fast: "When thou fastest, anoint thy head, and wash thy face, that thou appear not to men to fast, but to thy Father, who is in secret; and thy Father, who seeth in secret, will repay thee" (St. Matt. vi. 17, 18). We are told of the greatest servants of God that they fasted. Thus Moses and Elias fasted forty days, as, indeed, our Lord Himself did. The royal prophet frequently makes mention of his fasting (Ps. xxxiv. 13, lxxviii. 11, cviii. 24); Esdras (2 Esdras i. 4), Daniel (ix. 3), Esther (xiv. 2), and the prophetess Anna (St. Luke ii. 37), were remarkable for their fasting. The faithful of Antioch "were ministering to the Lord and fasting when the Holy Ghost said to them; Separate Me Saul and Barnabas for the work whereunto I have taken them. Then they, fasting and praying, and imposing their hands upon them, sent them away" (Acts xiii. 2, 3). And when the Apostles ordained priests, they fasted and prayed (Acts xiv. 22). Fasting moves God to show mercy. Thus the Ninivites pro-

claimed a fast and were pardoned (Jonas iii. 7-10). It makes prayer more efficacious (Tobias xii. 8; Judith iv. 12; Dan. ix. x.; St. Mark ix. 28). It also obtains temporal benefits. "We fasted and besought our God," says Esdras (viii. 23), "and it fell out prosperously unto us." (See also 2 Chron. xx.; 2 Esdras i. 4; Esther iv. 16.)

The holy fathers also frequently inculcate the duty of fasting, and enforce its observance by the teaching and practice of Holy Scripture, and by the consideration of how necessary it is for our fallen nature. They tell us that fasting is a part of the penance which is required of us if we have sinned; and if happily we have preserved our innocence, it is necessary as a discipline to strengthen us against the danger of falling. "Fast," says St. Basil, "because thou hast sinned, and fast also to prevent the danger of sinning."

Times of fasting. Though the sacred Scripture clearly inculcates the obligation, and sets forth the advantages of fasting, it nowhere lays down any precise rule as to the time and manner of fasting. One of the reasons for this silence is no doubt owing to the fact, that the same regulations are not equally well adapted to all times and circumstances. Yet, on the other hand, if the duty of fasting were left to each one's discretion, it is much to be feared many would neglect it altogether. The Church has therefore received power to determine the times and rules of fasting, and to modify them as the necessities of each age or country may require.

Lent. The fasting-days which we are commanded to observe are, "the forty days of Lent, certain vigils, the Ember-days, and, in England, the Wednesdays and Fridays in Advent." The fast of Lent is frequently spoken of by the ancient fathers as of apostolic institution. It is the most solemn season of penance throughout the year. In imitation of our Blessed Lord's fast of forty days, and in order to prepare her children for the solemn commemoration of His sufferings and death on the cross, the Church commands them to fast during Lent. This penitential season begins on Ash-Wednesday, and continues during the six following weeks, till Easter Sunday, and

thus embraces a period of forty days, exclusive of the Sundays.

Vigils. It was formerly the custom of the faithful to spend the day preceding the great festivals of the Church in prayer and fasting. In particular, they passed the night in watching and in exercises of devotion, as a preparation for the solemnity they were to observe on the following day. From this custom of watching, or keeping vigil during the night, the eves of these festivals were called Vigils. In course of time, the meeting of the faithful during the night, for purposes of devotion, gave rise to disorder and inconveniences, and therefore it fell into disuse; but we have a remnant of the ancient practice in the fasting-days or vigils which precede the festivals of Whit-Sunday, or Pentecost, SS. Peter and Paul, the Assumption, All Saints', and Christmas Day.

Ember-days. Each quarter of the year is consecrated to God by the observance of a three days' fast. The weeks appointed for this purpose are, the first week of Lent for the spring season; the week of Pentecost for the summer; the week following the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, September 14th, for the autumn; and the third week of Advent for the winter. From very ancient times these weeks have been called Ember-weeks, and the Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays occurring in them—the days on which the fast is kept—are called the Ember-days. The date of the institution of the fast of the Ember-days cannot be clearly ascertained. They are mentioned in a decree ascribed to the Holy Pope St. Urban in the year 224, and are reckoned by St. Leo the Great as of apostolic origin. The object of the institution of the Ember-days was to consecrate each season of the year by acts of penance and mortification; to beg God's blessing on the fruits of the earth, and to thank Him for those which had been gathered in; and likewise, as the Ember-weeks are the times specially appointed for the ordination of the ministers of the Church, to pray for a zealous priesthood, and for the abundance of the Divine blessing to descend on those who are chosen as the spiritual fathers of the faithful, and their guides in the way of salvation.

Advent. What the vigils are to ordinary festivals, or what Lent is to Easter, Advent is to Christmas. It is a time of penance and devotion to prepare the faithful to celebrate in a fitting manner the Advent, or coming of our Lord, by His birth into this world. Its institution seems as ancient as Christmas itself; though its duration, as well as the manner of its observance, have varied at different times and in different places. Like Lent, it for some time comprised a period of six weeks or forty days, part of which was kept as a strict fast. It now begins with the Sunday nearest the festival of St. Andrew, November 30th; so that the earliest day on which it can commence is the 27th of November, and the latest the 3d of December. It thus embraces four Sundays and three full weeks, together with part of a fourth. As the Catechism states, we are bound in England to fast on the Wednesdays and Fridays during Advent.

CHAP. LXXIV. The Rules of Fasting.

IT has been already said that the essence of the fast consists in taking only one full meal on the same day, and that not before mid-day. Formerly it was the custom to take nothing on fasting-days till the evening. In process of time, however, the single meal began to be taken at an earlier hour in the day, and this practice prepared the way for the further relaxation, by which a little was taken in the evening in addition to the full meal. The regulation which is enforced at the present day allows those who are bound to fast, to take a full meal any time after mid-day, and a small supper, or, as it is called, a collation, in the evening. The Church has nowhere defined the quantity which may be taken at the evening collation, but the general custom, which, in the absence of any authoritative declaration, may be considered the best interpreter of her laws, fixes the quantity at not more than about eight ounces. Besides this restriction as to the quantity allowed for collation, it is necessary to bear in mind that we are also bound to the strictest abstinence. Not only is all

kind of flesh-meat forbidden at collation, but also eggs, butter, cheese, and milk. The collation will therefore generally consist of bread and fruit; and, in virtue of the Rescript of our Holy Father, to which reference has already been made, the use of dripping and lard is permitted on all days except Good Friday. It is also customary to take a very small quantity in the morning, but this should never exceed two ounces.

At one time it was forbidden to drink wine on fasting-days, but this prohibition no longer exists; and, as a rule, liquids, such as beer, water, tea, or coffee, do not break the fast. Such liquids, however, as soups, milk, and generally those of a nourishing kind, are not allowed, except at the principal meal. All fasting-days are also abstinence-days, unless leave is expressly given to the contrary. When meat is allowed on fasting-days, whether by a general dispensation granted to all, as is commonly done in Lent, or by a particular dispensation granted to one or more, fish and meat are not allowed at the same meal. This prohibition of the joint use of fish and flesh-meat extends also to the Sundays of Lent, but not to any of the other abstinence-days throughout the year.

The proper order to follow on fasting-days is to take the principal meal about mid-day or after, and the collation in the evening; but, according to a declaration of the Congregation of the Sacred Penitentiary, those are not to be disturbed who for any reasonable cause invert the order, and take the collation after ten in the morning, and the dinner in the evening.

Each Bishop has power to modify to a certain extent the Lenten dispensations in his own diocese; but as the observances are for the most part uniform throughout England, it will be well to enumerate those which prevail at the present day. The list of dispensations which follows is taken from the Lenten Indult of the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster for the year 1861.

“1. Flesh-meat is allowed at the single meal of those who are bound to fast, and at the discretion of those who are not so bound, on all days except Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, and Ember-Saturday, and the four last

days in Holy Week. On Sundays, even those who are bound to fast may eat flesh-meat at their discretion.

"2. Eggs are allowed at the single meal of those who are bound to fast, and at the discretion of those who are not so bound, on all days except Ash-Wednesday and the three last days in Holy Week.

"3. Cheese, under the same restriction, is allowed on all days except Ash-Wednesday and Good Friday.

"4. The use of dripping and lard is permitted at dinner and collation on all days except Good Friday.

"On those days, Sundays included, whereon flesh-meat is allowed, fish is not permitted at the same meal."

CHAP. LXXV. Who are bound to fast and abstain.

1. THE Church does not intend her laws to bind where their observance would cause serious inconvenience, or where it interferes with duties of a higher kind. Thus the law of fasting only comes into force when persons have completed their twenty-first year, because at an earlier age fasting would often be injurious to the constitution. But no such inconvenience, as a rule, attends the observance of abstinence, and therefore children, no less than adults, are bound to abstain. No age has been fixed by the Church after which fasting ceases to be obligatory; but, according to the opinion of many theologians, those who are past sixty may with a safe conscience consider themselves exempt.

2. Those whose means of support are altogether precarious, or who are seldom sure of a full meal,—those who live by hard labour,—and generally those who require to eat several times in the day to enable them to fulfil the duties of their state of life,—are not bound to fast.

3. In times of sickness or of delicate health, where fasting would be injurious, the Church does not wish that this law should bind. Abstinence is not so frequently attended with inconvenience as fasting; and, therefore, those who are dispensed from fasting are still bound by the law of abstinence, unless the contrary is implied.

Where, however, the observance of abstinence is attended with serious inconvenience, it may be dispensed with. If, therefore, there be any who, from the state of their health, or from the nature of the duties in which they are engaged, believe themselves unable to comply with the precepts of the Church, they should, if possible, apply to their parish priest or confessor for a dispensation, and not take the matter into their own hands. They should also bear in mind that a dispensation always supposes a reasonable cause, and therefore they should not seek to obtain it without some proper ground of exemption.

CHAP. LXXVI.

Fourth and Fifth Commandments of the Church: To go to confession at least once a year; to receive the Blessed Sacrament at least once a year, and that at Easter or thereabouts.

It will be shown in its proper place that the Sacrament of Penance is the divinely appointed means for the remission of the sins committed after baptism, and, therefore, that confession, which is a part of this Sacrament, is a matter of strict obligation for those who have fallen into grievous sin after baptism. But though the divine law enjoins the confession of sins, it nowhere determines the time for the fulfilment of this duty. For a long period it was not necessary for the Church to lay down any law on this subject. The necessities of the faithful, and the great benefits to be derived from this divine institution, were sufficient inducements to insure a frequent approach to the Sacrament of Penance. In process of time, however, when the charity of many had grown cold, and a spirit of carelessness and indifference was widely prevalent, many began to neglect confession for years together. It became necessary, therefore, for the Church to impose a distinct command, and to enforce its observance under threat of separation from her communion. The law which is still in force was made at the fourth council of Lateran, 1215, and requires all the faithful of either sex, after they have come to the years of discretion, to confess their sins to their

pastor at least once a year. The council does not determine the particular time of the year at which confession should be made; but as the same decree goes on to enforce the obligation of receiving Holy Communion at Easter, it sufficiently indicates that confession should also be made at Easter, as part of the preparation for communion. But while inculcating the obligation of confession, the Church guards with jealous care the right of the faithful to choose their own confessor. It matters not whether the priest to whom they confess belongs to their parish or not, provided only he be approved by the Bishop in whose diocese he exercises his faculties.

The precept requires us to confess our sins *at least* once a year, in order to intimate to us that though this is sufficient to comply with the obligation which the Church imposes upon us, it is not sufficient to satisfy her desires. No general rule can be laid down as to the frequency of confession, because much depends on each one's state of life and facilities for coming to confession. This much, however, may be said, that it is very important for each one to have a regularly fixed time for approaching this Sacrament, and not to depart from it without some good reason. There are few, if any, who might not with advantage make their confession once a month; others, by the advice of their confessor, might do so once a fortnight, or once a week. But whatever may be a person's state of life, or whatever may be his regular time for going to confession, he should always make it a point to go as soon as possible, when he has had the misfortune to fall into mortal sin. Knowing, as we do, the uncertainty of our lives, and that we may any moment be summoned before the tribunal of God, it is the height of imprudence to remain a single day in the state in which, were we to die, we should be for ever lost.

As confession is the remedy for sin, it always presupposes its existence. So long, therefore, as children are incapable of sin, they are incapable of confession; but when they begin to come to the use of reason, and are able to distinguish between good and evil, they are able to commit sin, and with the evil comes the necessity for

the remedy. The age of seven is generally considered the time when children are capable of mortal sin, and when, consequently, they should be instructed and taught to make their confession.

Easter Communion. Our Blessed Lord tells us in the most emphatic manner, "Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you" (St. John vi. 54). So great was the desire of the early Christians to partake of this heavenly banquet, that many of them received the Holy Communion daily. St. Luke tells us of the early converts to Christianity, "that they continued daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house" (Acts ii. 46). As time went on, however, this first fervour began to cool; and the same reason which obliged the great Council of Lateran to enforce the precept of yearly confession, also led to the command to receive the Holy Communion at least at Easter. Many of the observations which have been made in reference to confession equally apply to the precept of Easter Communion. For example, the command to receive the Blessed Sacrament belongs to the divine law, and the Church only determines the time of its fulfilment. She requires us to receive Holy Communion at least once a year, but her desire is that we should do so much more frequently. But though the explanation of this precept has much in common with that of the foregoing one, there are some points of difference which should not be passed over. Thus, while we are simply commanded to go to confession once a year, the exact time of the year at which the obligation of communion must be complied with is defined. The general law of the Church requires all the faithful to receive the Blessed Sacrament between Palm Sunday and Low Sunday, both days included. In England, however, where, on account of the small number of priests, it would be extremely difficult for all to approach the Sacraments during this fortnight, the time for complying with this obligation has been lengthened so as to include the whole of Lent, beginning with Ash-Wednesday and ending with Low Sunday. Again, the reverence which is due to so great a

Sacrament makes it necessary to put off its reception till children are capable of being well instructed in its nature, and the dispositions which are required to receive it with fruit. While seven is the age at which children should be taught to make their confession, they are not generally admitted to Holy Communion till between the age of ten and thirteen. But it should be carefully borne in mind, that when they are able sufficiently to understand the nature of this Sacrament, they are bound to prepare themselves to fulfil the precept of receiving it.

In Catholic countries, where the regular distinction of parishes exists, each one is bound to make his Easter communion in his own parish church, or at least to ask the permission of the parish priest or Bishop, if he wishes to communicate elsewhere. This practice is important both as an example to the rest of the faithful, and as a means of enabling the pastor to know his flock, and to distinguish those who are living in the neglect of their Christian duties. Though it is not of precise obligation in countries such as our own, still the general law of the Church sufficiently indicates her desires on the subject.

CHAP. LXXVII.

Sixth Commandment of the Church: Not to marry within certain degrees of kindred, nor to solemnise marriage at the forbidden times.

THERE are two kinds of impediments or hindrances to the contract of marriage; the one renders the contract unlawful, the other annuls it. Hence the former is called a *forbidding*, and the latter an *annulling* impediment. They who marry knowing that their marriage is forbidden by the Church, receive the Sacrament validly, that is to say, they are really married; but they commit a grievous sin. But if they attempt marriage in spite of a diriment impediment, that is, in spite of an impediment which makes the contract void, no matter whether they are aware of its existence or not, they are not really married in the sight of God and of His Church. If they knew of such an impediment and yet persisted in attempting marriage, they would

commit a very grievous sin. If they acted in good faith, that is, if they had no idea of the existence of the impediment, the marriage would still be void, but their ignorance would excuse them from sin.

It will be shown, in treating of matrimony, that the matter of this Sacrament is the contract, and consequently where there is no contract there is no Sacrament. Now in the same sort of way as the State has the power of making persons incapable of contracting certain civil obligations, or as it considers null and void contracts, in which the necessary formalities have not been observed,—so the Church has power to declare that those who are related to each other within certain degrees are incapable of entering into the contract of marriage, and that the contract is void unless certain prescribed conditions are fulfilled.

The general impediments of marriage are explained under the Sacrament of Matrimony; all that has to be done here is to show the degrees of kindred within which the Sacrament is invalid.

1. The Church declares null and void the contract of marriage between persons who are related to each other by blood within the fourth degree. To understand the meaning of these, it is necessary to state that brothers and sisters are said to be related by blood in the first degree; the children of brothers or sisters, that is, first cousins, are related in the second degree. Their children, again, or second cousins, are related to each other in the third degree. Third cousins, therefore, will be related in the fourth degree. Hence, where any relationship exists not more distant than that of third cousins, the contract of marriage between such persons is null and void.

2. The Church also annuls the contract of marriage between those who are related by affinity within the fourth degree. This will be easily understood if we bear in mind that by marriage man and wife are made one flesh (St. Matt. xix. 6). All who are related by blood to the husband are related in the same degree, by affinity, to the wife; and, for the same reason, all who are related by blood to the wife are related in the same degree, by affinity, to the husband. Hence the meaning of the law of the Church

is, that if the first husband were to die, his wife could not marry any of his relatives within the fourth degree; and, on the same principle, if the husband were the survivor, he could not marry any one related by blood within the fourth degree to his former wife.

Where special reasons exist, dispensations are often given to enable persons to marry who are related either by blood or affinity in the third or fourth degree; and, in exceptional cases, in the second, or even in the first degree, where the relationship is by affinity.

Such are the degrees of kindred which make marriage null and void. The prohibition to solemnise marriage at certain times is simply an impediment which would render marriage unlawful, but would not annul it. They who married without a dispensation at forbidden times would commit a great sin, but they would be really married. The times during which the solemnisation of marriage is forbidden, as the Catechism lays down, are "from the first Sunday of Advent till after the Epiphany, and from Ash-Wednesday till after Low Sunday."

PART III.

ON HOPE, AND THE MEANS OF GRACE.

CHAP. LXXVII. On Hope.

It has been explained that it is common to divide Christian doctrine into three parts, corresponding to the three theological virtues. Under Faith comes the treatment of the articles of the Creed; for these are the subject-matter of faith, or what faith is engaged upon. Under Charity the Commandments are treated of; for keeping them is made by our Lord Himself to be both the exercise and the proof of charity. And under the head of Hope it is usual to speak of prayer and the Sacraments; not because hope is exercised upon these exactly as faith is upon the articles of the Creed, or charity upon the Commandments, but because prayer and the Sacraments rest upon hope, and are the instruments of it. Having, then, treated of faith and charity, the next thing to be spoken of is hope.

By hope, in its ordinary signification, we mean a lively desire of any thing accompanied with the expectation of obtaining it. This, if it rests on human motives and aims at natural goods, is called human hope. But the theological virtue of hope is distinguished from this by resting on supernatural motives, and aiming at supernatural ends. And so it is defined to be "a supernatural virtue, by which we confidently look forward to future happiness in the next world, and those present graces and helps which are necessary to our obtaining it." It is not a virtue which we can attain to by our own efforts, but, like faith and charity, is the gift of God infused in us at our baptism. Like the other theological virtues, it is necessary for salvation.

"For we are saved," St. Paul says, "by hope" (Rom. viii. 24). And it is put second amongst them because it rests upon and presupposes faith. When we know God by faith, we may by hope aspire to Him as our highest Good, or we may cleave to Him by charity on account of His infinite goodness in Himself. But it is scarcely, if at all, possible for a man to have charity without first having hope.

The chief things to be explained about hope are, first, its object; secondly, the grounds or motives of it; thirdly, the subjects of hope; and fourthly, the obligations we are under respecting it.

I. The object of hope is God as our chief good, or the possession of God in heaven. It differs from charity in this; for by charity we love God for His own sake, but by hope we seek God with reference to ourselves, as containing in Himself all that can satisfy our souls. The Catechism teaches us that the end for which we were made was to be happy with God in the next world. St. Augustine says, "We were made for Thee, O Lord, and our heart is restless and dissatisfied until it rests in Thee." Hope, then, is this desire and aspiration after God as the end of our being. And because it contains also an expectation of possessing God, it is the support and encouragement of a Christian in his course through this world.

But when we desire any object, and certain means are necessary for our obtaining it, we cannot but also desire those means. We do not desire them for their own sake, but because they are the means to that which we do so desire. Hence they are called the secondary objects of our desire. Now we cannot obtain the possession of God in heaven without those supernatural graces and helps which God has provided for us in His Church, because they are essential to our serving Him. Hence, while God is the primary object of hope, these graces and helps, as being the means of obtaining that end, are the secondary object of hope. And so in the acts of hope which are commonly used, we express our confidence in God's giving us eternal life in the next world, and in this life His grace

and the forgiveness of our sins. For these are the chief means necessary for obtaining it.

But may we hope for natural goods such as life, health, and prosperity? Or, at least, can we exercise the virtue of hope about these? This depends entirely on the end we have before us in desiring them. If our end and object is God, and we desire them because we have reason to think that they will conduce to that end, and so far as they conduce to it, then we are bound to hope for them, just as we should for any other of the means to eternal life. But so far as these are desired or hoped for simply for our own gratification, and not in *order* to God who is our end, they are *inordinate* desires, and have the nature of sin in greater or less degree, according to the gravity of the matter and the circumstances of the case.

II. Next come the grounds of hope. For hope, it has been said, is not merely a desire of a thing, but a confident expectation of obtaining it. What are, then, the grounds of our expecting that we shall obtain the enjoyment of God in heaven? Faith makes known to us certain attributes of God; His omnipotence, that He is able to do all things; His faithfulness to His promises, that He is a God of truth, with whom, as St. Paul says, it is impossible to lie; and that He is infinitely good and merciful. These attributes of God, then, are the grounds of hope. We know by revelation the promises of God, and that He is both able and willing to fulfil them; and thus hope rests on a certain basis. So it is in the act of hope: "O my God, relying on Thy almighty power, and Thy infinite mercy and goodness, and because Thou art faithful to Thy promises, I trust in Thee," &c.

But it may be said, although on the part of God hope rests on a secure foundation, yet does it so on ours also? To have a good ground of hope, we must not only rest on the certainty of God's promises, but on our own fulfilment of the conditions on which those promises are made. And our reasonable distrust of ourselves may well weaken our hope. But to this it may be said, that while our distrust of ourselves may prevent our having certainty of our salvation, which we should have if we had *only* to look to the

promises of God, yet this distrust is excessive if it destroys our hope; more especially because we are taught to rest not only on the goodness, but on the mercy of God, and that not through our merits, but through those of Christ. In short, while the conditions of God's promises which we have to fulfil are enough to make us fear, yet we are not to lean our hope so much on our fulfilment of them, but chiefly on the mercy of God.

III. And this leads us to consider the subject of hope, or who can possess it. Since hope is an ardent desire, accompanied by an expectation of obtaining, it does not exist in the souls of the Blessed; for they now possess what formerly they hoped for: "And that which a man hath why doth he still hope for?" Nor is it to be found in the lost souls in hell. For though they ardently desire the happiness of heaven, they have no expectation of ever obtaining it; and this is indeed a part of their misery. In this world those who are without faith are also without hope; for hope, as we have seen, is based upon faith. They are of those described in Holy Scripture, who, because they are without God in this world, have therefore no hope (Eph. ii. 12). But can those who have faith be without hope, as they can be without charity? Not commonly or easily; for while charity is lost by mortal sin, faith and hope are not. Yet there is such a thing as despair even in this life, and it is one of the six sins against the Holy Ghost; for if it is truly and absolutely despair, it is but the beginning of a man's final reprobation. It is a far better thing for a person never to have had hope because he has never had faith, and therefore has not known God to desire the possession of Him, than to have lost hope; because, in this case, though he knows and desires the happiness of heaven, he has no expectation of ever getting there.

IV. Hope is an infused virtue; we cannot in the first instance acquire it of ourselves. God gives it to us as He does faith at our baptism. But although it is a gift in the first instance, yet is it a habit that we are bound to keep up, to nourish, to practise, and to strengthen. The obligation to do this is included under the first commandment; for the first commandment teaches us to adore

God ; and we adore God, as the Catechism says, by faith, hope, and charity. Our duty to God is made up of this trinity of virtues. Hope, then, as the second of these obligations, must be here spoken of.

What obligations are we under in respect to it ? It is difficult to lay down precisely how often and on what occasions a person is bound to make acts of hope. But we may say in general, that he is bound to do so sufficiently often to keep up the habit, and in particular he is bound to make acts of it—(1) when the promises of God are first proposed to him ; (2) when he is in any danger of losing hope through temptations against it ; and (3) at the hour of death.

But we may sin against hope, not only by omitting to make acts of it, but by sins directly opposed to it. Of these there are two kinds, one by way of excess, and the other of defect. The first is called presumption, the other despair. Despair means a want of hope, a distrust of God's goodness and His promises to us. God has done so much in all times to manifest His love to us, that to distrust it is a sin peculiarly hateful to Him. This was the sin of Cain, when he said, "My iniquity is greater than that I may deserve pardon." And also of Judas, as even he, it has been thought, might have been pardoned if he had not distrusted the mercy of God. God's mercy, like His other attributes, is infinite, and therefore no amount of sin ought to make us despair of forgiveness, if only we heartily repent. This is taught us in many passages of Holy Scripture (Isa. i. 18 ; St. Matt. xviii. 22). Besides the sin of despair, men may sin against hope in a lesser degree, by a want of confidence in the goodness of God, and His promises to us. This is called diffidence in God. The children of Israel were punished in the desert for this sin (Ps. lxx. 21, 22).

Presumption is the other sin against hope. It does not consist in having too much hope ; for hope being a virtue, we can never have too much of it. But it is a perversion of hope, just as superstition is a *perversion of religion*. The foundation of hope is the goodness and promises of God upon our endeavouring to fulfil our part.

Presumption, therefore, may be committed in two ways; first, when we trust to the goodness of God without making any effort ourselves. For God is just as well as good; and He has made no promises to such as do not endeavour to keep His laws. To rely, then, on the goodness of God while we go on in sin, is to rely where we have no grounds for reliance. And so presumption is described as "a foolish expectation of salvation, without making proper use of the necessary means to obtain it." The second way in which we may be guilty of presumption is by trusting to our own efforts, or supposed merits, without seeking or resting on the grace of God. Presumption, like despair, is, in its full development, one of the sins against the Holy Ghost. The latter is brought on by not resting sufficiently on the goodness of God; the former by neglecting altogether, what is a small but necessary part of the grounds of hope, our own efforts to fulfil the conditions of salvation.

CHAP. LXXIX. Of Prayer.

AFTER explaining hope, it is natural to speak next of prayer, because prayer is founded on hope, and as it were the instrument of it. We could not pray unless we had hope of God helping us. We pray as a means of obtaining what we hope for. And prayer comes in order after the Commandments, because it is one of the means by which we get grace to keep them. The question is asked in the Catechism whether we can do any good work of ourselves, and it is answered, that we cannot without the help of God's grace, to be obtained by prayer and the Holy Sacraments. We cannot keep the Commandments of ourselves: "Without Me," our Lord says, "you can do nothing." To keep the Commandments, we must be assisted by God's grace; and this grace we cannot have without prayer, which God has appointed as the means of obtaining it. "It is clear," says St. Augustine, "that God gives some things, as, for example, the gift of faith, without men's seeking it by prayer, whilst other things He has in store only for those who pray for them, as the gift of

perseverance.”* Let us first define what is meant by prayer.

Definition of Prayer. The word ‘prayer’ is used in two senses in the Catechism. In its widest sense it means any elevation of the soul to God, or a communing with God for any object, whether to praise Him, to render thanks to Him, to make known our wants, or to implore pardon of our sins. The Catechism defines it to be the “raising up of our minds and hearts to God.” For thinking of God is not of itself prayer, and exercising our affections towards God is not precisely prayer, which consists of both of these together, the latter being founded on the former. It is a joint exercise of the heart and mind.

But, in a narrower sense of the word, and that in which it is more commonly used, it means addressing ourselves to God, to ask those things which we need. When we use the word in reference to our fellow-men, it signifies to ask earnestly, after the same manner as we should pray to God.

Kinds of Prayer. There are two sorts of prayer; mental, or that which is made by the mind, ‘*mens*,’ only without any utterance of words, and vocal, or that which is uttered by the voice, ‘*vox*.’ It is to be observed, that vocal prayer includes mental prayer in some degree, otherwise it would scarcely merit the name of prayer at all. Those who repeat words without at the same time striving to raise up their hearts and minds to God, deserve the reproach which our Lord quoted out of Isaiah and applied to the Jews: “This people honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me” (St. Matt. xv. 8). But, though vocal prayer includes mental, yet, because the exercise of the mind is more important than the repetition of words, and because the former is studied more carefully in mental than in vocal prayer, mental prayer is considered as a more perfect kind of prayer than vocal. Moreover, we exercise our minds in a higher way ordinarily in mental than in vocal prayer, as we are not bound down to follow the literal meaning of the words, but are left at liberty to take any higher range of thought that may be suggested by the subject on which we meditate.

* St. Ang. de Dono Pers. lib. ii. c. 15.

Subdivisions. There are some further subdivisions of these two sorts of prayer. Mental prayer is distinguished into different kinds, according to the manner in which it is made; but this subject belongs rather to spiritual writers than to the explanation of Christian doctrine. Vocal prayer is also divided, according to the manner in which it is made, into two kinds; public prayer, made in common with others, and private prayer, or that made by ourselves.

Necessity of Prayer. To make use of prayer is not only a matter of counsel but of precept. This is the first reason of its necessity. Scripture speaks very clearly on the subject: "Watch and pray," our Lord said, "that you enter not into temptation" (St. Matt. xxvi. 41). He taught "that men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (St. Luke xviii. 1). And though it is doubted whether it is here given as a command that we should always pray, yet it is agreed that it implies the obligation of praying frequently. St. Paul says, "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. v. 17). And many other passages to the same effect. This is, therefore, the first reason of the necessity of prayer, that God has commanded it, not merely as a matter of counsel to the perfect, but of universal obligation. The second reason is, because God has appointed prayer to be the ordinary means for obtaining those graces which are absolutely necessary for us: "Ask, and ye shall receive" (St. John xvi. 24). And as we are bound to save our souls, we are also bound to take the necessary means for doing so.

The obligation of prayer, as has been said in explaining the first commandment, arises from its being a part of the virtue of religion. But the question arises, When and how often are we obliged to pray, so as to be guilty of sin if we omit it? First, then, every one is bound to pray frequently; but so much depends on circumstances, that it is not easy to say how frequently. Some theologians have gone so far as to say that a person would be guilty of mortal sin who omitted all prayer for a week; and most agree that he would be by neglecting it for a month. Besides this, however, a person may be strictly bound to pray by the circumstances in which he is placed; as, for example, if pressed by a strong temptation, which of him-

self he has not strength to resist; when in evident danger of death; when he has to receive any Sacrament for which prayer is necessary by way of preparation; in time of great public calamity, and in general whenever there is particular need of the Divine assistance. For prayer is the appointed means for obtaining it.

Efficacy of Prayer. Our Lord has not only commanded us to pray, but promised to hear us when we do so: "Ask, and ye shall receive" (St. John xvi. 24), and, again, "Every one that asketh receiveth" (St. Matthew vii. 8). And St. James says in like manner, "You have not, because you ask not" (chap. iv. 2). In these and other passages we are taught that prayer is efficacious, or that God has promised to answer prayer. St. James quotes the example of Elias, who prayed that it might not rain on the earth, and it rained not for three years and six months (chap. v. 17). Hezekias prayed, and God lengthened his life by several years, and made the shadow go back as a sign that He would do so (4 Kings xx.). But yet there is this difference between prayer and the Sacraments as means of grace, that in the Sacraments certain definite effects or graces are promised on the right reception of particular Sacraments, and all that is required of the recipients is, not to put any obstacle to the free course of God's grace. But in prayer it is left to ourselves what blessings or graces we ask for, and also more is left to depend on our own dispositions. Hence the efficacy of prayer is a matter of degree, depending on the object and character of our prayer. This is expressed by St. James when he says, "You ask and you receive not, because you ask amiss" (chap. iv. 3).

Dispositions. This, then, leads us to consider the dispositions of prayer, or those on which its efficacy depends. These may be reduced to three heads; (1) the state of the person who prays, (2) the manner in which the prayer is made, (3) the things he asks for. As to the first, though it is not strictly true "that God does not hear sinners" (St. John ix. 31),—for our Lord sets before us the case of the publican whose prayer was heard, and He Himself received the prayer of the penitent thief,—yet even these instances do not prove that He heard them irrespective of

their dispositions; and, on the other hand, St. James says, that "the continual prayer of a just man availeth much" (chap. v. 16). We have many examples of Almighty God listening to the prayers of His faithful servants expressly on the ground of their being such (Gen. xx. 17; Numb. xiv. 20; Job xlii. 8). And the doctrine of the invocation of saints is founded upon this. So that it cannot be doubted that something of the efficacy of prayer depends on the state of the person who makes it,—his being a holy man, or his being at least in the state of grace.

Secondly, the efficacy of prayer depends on the qualities or character of the prayer itself. As prayer is the raising up of our minds and hearts to God, the first and most essential qualities of prayer are attention and devotion; for without attention of mind and devotion of heart it scarcely merits the name of prayer at all. And so the Catechism says, that when our distractions are wilful, that is, when we are not trying to attend to our prayers, we do not pray well, but we rather offend God. Yet distractions, even though accompanied with some negligence, do not destroy the effect of prayer so long as they are not wilful, much less when they arise from the weakness of nature. In that case they are not sinful, and God accepts our endeavours, notwithstanding that we seem to pray so unsuccessfully. Yet we are bound to do our best to avoid distractions, and this by avoiding the occasions of them, and by carefully putting ourselves into the presence of God before we begin. This is what is meant where it is said in Holy Scripture, "When thou comest to pray, prepare thy heart, and be not as one that tempteth God" (Ecclus. xviii. 23). The second essential quality of prayer is, that it should be humble. Holy Scripture contains many passages which show how important a quality of prayer this is: "He hath had respect to the prayer of the humble, and hath not despised their petitions" (Ps. ci. 18). "The prayer of him that humbleth himself shall pierce the clouds" (Ecclus. xxxv. 21). And our Lord teaches us the importance of humility in prayer by the parable of the Pharisee and the publican (Luke xviii.), in which He represents the prayer of the publican, though a sinner, as

listened to before that of the Pharisee, precisely on account of his greater humility: "Because every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke xviii. 14). "God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble" (St. James iv. 6; 1 Peter v. 5). The third most essential quality of prayer is, that it should be confident. St. James (ch. i.) says that if any man wants wisdom, let him ask it of God; but he adds, "let him ask in faith, nothing wavering," for that the man who wavers must not think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. Our Blessed Lord Himself insisted on this quality of prayer when He taught His disciples, that if they had only faith they might at a word remove mountains; and He added, "Therefore, I say unto you, all things whatsoever you ask when you pray, believe that you shall receive, and they shall come to you" (St. Mark xi. 24). The reason of this is plain. After all the love and goodness which God has shown us, it cannot but be pleasing to Him that we should trust in Him, as children do in a father who has made great sacrifices for them; and that therefore "we should go with confidence to the throne of grace" (Heb. iv. 16), being sure that God is willing and ready to help us. It is remarkable that we find no case in the Gospels in which our Lord was asked with confidence to work any miracle, where He did not only grant the request, but showed Himself pleased that it was made. We have a remarkable instance of this in the case of the woman of Canaan (St. Matt. xv. 22). The fourth quality of prayer is its being persevering. For though God answers our prayers, He does not always do so immediately, but often lets us wait some time first. He Himself gave us an example of this perseverance when, in the Garden of Gethsemani, He thrice repeated the same prayer. The parables of the unjust judge and of the man who came to his friend at night (St. Luke xi.) were to teach men that "they ought always to pray, not to faint" (Luke xviii.). And our Lord rewarded those who persevered in praying Him to help them (St. Luke xviii. 39). And St. James, besides giving instances of the efficacy of prayer, speaks as above of "the continual

prayer" of a just man as being effectual. These are the most important qualities of prayer, though there are some others which also add much to its efficacy.

Thirdly, the efficacy of prayer depends on its being made for the right objects. We should not pray for things unjust, unreasonable, bad for us, or useless, but for what is necessary and good. God is willing to give all that is good for us in answer to our prayers. But as, when the mother of the sons of Zebedee made a request to our Lord, He said to them, "You know not what you ask" (St. Matt. xx. 22), so it often happens, especially in our requests for temporal goods, that, in our ignorance of what is good for us, we may, like children, ask for things that would be hurtful. In praying for the graces that are needful for our state of life, or to enable us to avoid sin, we cannot be wrong, and may therefore pray unconditionally. But in praying for any sort of spiritual blessings that might not be suited to us, or in praying for temporal blessings, it should always be with the condition that God sees them to be good for us. For in withholding such goods from us, God is consulting our interests more completely than if He were to give us what we ourselves should not ask for, did we see, as He does, that it would be harmful to us. Nor should we only pray for ourselves. St. Paul says, "I exhort, therefore, that supplications, prayers, and intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men, for kings, and all who are in high station" (1 Tim. ii. 1). And our Lord instructs us that even our enemies should not be excepted. "Pray for them that persecute you and calumniate you" (St. Matt. v. 44). We should pray, as the Church does in her public offices, for the conversion of the heathen, Jews, infidels, heretics, and schismatics,—that they be brought to the light of truth and be reconciled to the Church. And lastly, the Church teaches us, both by precept and example, to pray for the souls of the faithful departed, since their pains may be lessened and their time shortened by the suffrages of the faithful who are still on earth.

CHAP. LXXX. Invocation of the Saints and Angels.

PRAYER is spoken of in the Catechism as the raising up of our hearts and minds to God, because, in the highest sense of the word, it is directed to God alone; for God is the only source and fountain from whom all blessings and graces flow. He is "the giver of every best and perfect gift" (St. James i. 17). But as we obtain the natural gifts of God in this world not directly from Him, but through the means of other persons,—and so we apply to these persons as being able to get them for us when we cannot do so, or cannot do so easily, for ourselves,—so it is likewise about the supernatural gifts of God. We may go immediately to God for them, or we may obtain them more easily by the assistance and intercession of others, to whom, therefore, we address ourselves. In this sense, therefore, the Church teaches us to invoke, or pray to, the saints as the friends of God, through whose intercession we may obtain many graces that we cannot easily obtain for ourselves. It is in this secondary sense of the word that we speak of praying to the saints.

The duty of honouring the saints belongs to the first commandment, and has been already explained. Here we are speaking of prayer to the saints as a means of grace; for it is a means by which we obtain graces indirectly through the intervention of others which we cannot obtain by ourselves. For, as it has been already shown, one way in which God helps is through the prayers of others, and we are taught accordingly to pray for one another. In the Lord's Prayer we are taught to say, "our Father," and not "my Father," to show us that we are not to pray for ourselves only but for all others. St. Paul, in his Epistles, over and over again recommended himself and his work to those he was writing to. If, therefore, it is useful to obtain the prayers of our brethren on earth, who are still subject to sin and imperfection, and if God is more ready to hear those who, by their office in His sanctuary, or by their personal holiness, are brought nearer to Him than others, how much more may we expect to obtain from the prayers of the angels who stand near the throne

of God, from the saints who are described as His friends, or from the Blessed Virgin, who is His very Mother.

We are taught, then, to pray to the saints because, as the Catechism teaches, they have great power with God. Yet, still the Church makes a marked distinction in the form of the prayers addressed to the saints and those addressed to God. When we pray to God, we say, as in the Litanies, *Deliver us, Have mercy on us, Spare us*; or we ask Him immediately for those gifts or graces which He is the sovereign Lord of, and can give to whom He will. But when we pray to the saints, we address them not as having themselves power to grant our requests, but as interceding for us with Him who has that power. "Holy Mary, and all saints, intercede for us with our Lord that we may merit to be helped and saved *by Him*." This prayer, which forms part of the daily office of Prime, is an example of the difference of expression which is used in praying to the saints and to God.

We are also taught by the Church not merely that we may pray to the saints, but that it is useful to do so.* It is not, indeed, a matter of strict obligation, like praying to God, but, as we are bound to save our souls, so we are bound to take the means to do so; and in proportion to the importance of the means, so is the danger of neglecting it. Theologians, therefore, lay it down that since praying to the saints, and above all to the Blessed Virgin, is a very great means of obtaining those graces and helps on which our very salvation depends, a person could not be excused from sin who entirely neglected it.

The doctrine of the Church on this subject is confirmed by Holy Scripture, which teaches us both that the Heavenly Spirits know what passes on earth, and that they interest themselves in it. Thus in the Book of Daniel we have an account of the Angel Gabriel appearing to the prophet, and telling him that from the first day that he set his heart to understand, to afflict himself in the sight of his God, his words had been heard, and he (the angel) was come for his words (chap. x. 12). In the Apocalypse St. John says that he beheld "the four living creatures and

* "It is good and useful to invoke them." *Council of Trent*, s. 25.

the four-and-twenty ancients fall down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the saints" (chap. v. 8). And our Blessed Lord Himself says that "there shall be joy before the angels of God upon one sinner doing penance" (St. Luke xv. 10). It is plain, therefore, that, as the Catechism says, the saints and angels know what passes on earth, and that they interest themselves in our behalf. It is observable that while Protestants raise difficulties as to how the good angels, who have never fallen, can see and know what takes place here, they make no such difficulty about the fallen angels, and even go beyond the Catholic doctrine in attributing to the devils knowledge of secret and future things, such as God only can possess. Now while the devils, as being spirits, are not circumscribed in their knowledge and motions as we are, by being tied to the body, yet there is no reason to suppose that they are superior to the angels who stand in the light of God's countenance. We cannot conceive that their knowledge and power should be increased, but rather diminished, by their fall. Why should not the angels be at least as full of knowledge, as active and eager for our good as the devils are for our destruction.

Nor is it in any way derogatory to God's honour, or to Christ's merits, to pray to the saints. When a man desires to obtain some boon from his sovereign, unless he is high in his favour, he seeks not merely to urge his request in a personal audience, but to obtain the interest and interference of those who stand next the throne, and are continually in the presence of the sovereign. And no one dreams that this is in any way derogatory to his honour or good-will towards his subjects. It is, then, in the same way that we invoke the saints, not so as to take away from God's honour, but precisely because He is so great and we are so small. It is not because of the insufficiency of Christ's merits, but of our own, that we apply to those who stand next the throne of God, and are always in His presence, that being, as St. Bernard says, now secure of their own salvation, they may exert themselves for ours.

No Catholic ever supposes that when we pray to the saints we are giving them the honour that is due to God, or that in seeking their intercession we rest on their merits and satisfaction instead of our Lord's. The misapprehension of Protestants on this point arises from ignorance, and from explaining Catholic doctrine by their own practice. They do not pray to any but God; hence the very idea of prayer in their minds is that of divine worship; and they exclaim, as indeed any one would, at divine worship being given to the saints; while Catholics, because they acknowledge and worship a whole hierarchy in heaven, pray to the saints and angels without dreaming of giving them that honour which belongs to God alone. Protestants, again, acknowledge no intercessor but Christ; and indeed in that sense in which our Lord ever lives to make intercession for us,—(Heb. vii. 25), offering to the Eternal Father His sufferings and His Blood for us,—in this sense there is indeed “but one Mediator of God and man, the Man Christ Jesus” (1 Tim. ii. 5). To ask the intercession of the saints in this way would indeed be blasphemy. But so entirely different is the sense in which we ask the saints to intercede for us, that it would be no less blasphemy were we, in this sense of the word, to ask our Lord to intercede or mediate for us at all. So far, then, from the invocation of the saints derogating from God's glory or honour, it is chiefly from the consideration of God's greatness and majesty that its reasonableness and importance is seen.

CHAP. LXXXI. The Lord's Prayer: First Part.

THE “Our Father” is called the Lord's Prayer, because actually composed by our Lord Himself, who also taught His disciples to use it. St. Luke (ch. xi.) narrates the occasion: “One of His disciples said to Him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And He said to them, When you pray, say, ‘Our Father,’ &c.” It is also given by St. Matthew in the 6th chapter as part of our Lord's sermon on the mount. In some versions of the New Testament, especially the Greek, we have a dox-

ology added at the end: "For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen." But it is pretty certain that this is an addition, though a very ancient one, to the words which our Lord taught; and so the Church does not teach us to use it.

Division of the Lord's Prayer. The Lord's Prayer begins with an address to God, as our Father who is in heaven. It contains, besides, seven petitions, of which the first three are made for what relates to God's greater glory, as it can be promoted by us, and the four last to our own more immediate wants, whether spiritual or temporal. Just as the first commandments relate to our duty to God, as the first and most important thing, so the first petitions of the Lord's Prayer teach us in like manner "to seek first the kingdom of God and His justice."

Our Lord has given us a prayer that should not be suited to any one particular class of persons, but to all; and this is a wonderful characteristic of it, that it is fitted for persons of every age and sex and degree of intelligence. It is so short that it can be easily learnt and remembered, and yet in its brevity it contains a petition for every thing that we want to ask for. It is easy to be understood, and yet contains depths of suggestive meanings, so that the most intellectual and spiritual can ever repeat it with relish. Whether we design to pray for our neighbour or ourselves, whether for spiritual or temporal blessings, we still find it contain what we want. And it seems even to adapt itself to each one's frame of mind, so that, according to our present spiritual state or condition, we find it express the very meaning that is most suitable to us. That this should be so is nothing more than what we might expect of a prayer composed and given to us by God Himself. Yet this is a good deal overlooked, because so little pains is taken to make children understand the Lord's Prayer. When it is carefully studied, and its various meanings, literal and spiritual, are brought out, it serves as a most solid foundation for the art of praying. When children are well instructed in this, prayer becomes no longer the sort of dull unmeaning obligation which so many seem to regard it as.

Our Father who art in heaven. These words, "Our Father who art in heaven," form the introduction to the Lord's Prayer, and, if properly understood, powerfully help to produce in us the requisite dispositions for praying well. We are reminded by the word "*our*" that we are to pray, not only for ourselves, but likewise for all others, and especially for those who belong to the household of the Church. We are to appear before God as the children of a common Father, united together by mutual charity, and having one desire in common to promote His greater glory, and to implore of His divine bounty the graces and blessings which are needful for us. We call God our Father to awaken a filial trust and confidence in Him, and by this tender name to move His clemency to grant us what we ask for. The very name 'Father' is a prayer for us, because it is the duty of a father to provide for the necessities of his children, and not to visit with severity the faults which they commit, but to be always ready to pardon and forgive. The repentant prodigal returning to his home made use of the same tender address, to obtain the forgiveness of his undutiful conduct: "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee" (St. Luke xv. 18). St. Augustine observes that in the Old Testament God is called Lord or Master, and not Father, because under the Mosaic dispensation men were His servants or slaves; but we are His children: "For we have not received the spirit of bondage again in fear, but the spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. For the Spirit Himself giveth testimony to our spirit that we are the sons of God" (Rom. viii. 15, 16). Though some interpreters are of opinion that the Lord's Prayer is addressed to the Father alone, or First Person of the Blessed Trinity, it seems more true to say that it is addressed to the three Divine Persons in common. God is called our Father because He created us, because He preserves us by His providence, because He has redeemed us and regenerated us by His grace. But these benefits proceed alike from the three Divine Persons, and therefore when God is styled Father in relation to us, the name belongs equally to each of the three Divine Persons.

When we speak of God as being in heaven, we do not mean to imply that He is not also every where else; but He is said to dwell in heaven because He there principally manifests His glory: "He hath set His tabernacle in the sun," says the Psalmist (Ps. xviii. 6). Again, "He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh at them" (Ps. ii. 4). And again, "Who is like the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high" (Ps. cxii. 5). Another reason why we are taught at the beginning of our prayer to address God as our Father who is in heaven, is that we may raise our minds and hearts in the time of prayer above the things of this world, and by the example of the saints and angels, and the contemplation of their eternal kingdom, we may be moved to bless and praise God, and to implore with earnestness the graces and helps which will enable us to reach that happy abode. Thus the Psalmist: "To Thee have I lifted up my eyes who dwellest in heaven" (Ps. cxxii. 1).

Hallowed be Thy name. By 'name' is here meant not merely the word God, or any other appellation by which men designate Him, but God Himself, and whatever is called after Him, or in any way belongs to Him. It is not the name, but the thing: "Whatever is called God, or is worshiped" (2 Thess. ii. 4), that is to be hallowed. Just as in the second commandment we are forbidden to take God's name in vain,—meaning not only the actual name, but God and every thing that pertains to Him, or is connected with Him,—so here we pray that, on the contrary, we may love, honour, and reverence God and all that in any way belongs to Him.

The word 'hallow,' or sanctify, has two meanings; one is to make a thing holy, the other is to treat with reverence a thing that is holy. It is, of course, in the latter sense that the word is here used. God Himself is essentially holy; and every thing that pertains or is consecrated to Him is holy in proportion to the nearness to which it is brought to Him. But though God is holy, and all that pertains to Him, yet men do not always treat Him with reverence, and it is this primary duty enjoined in the second commandment that we are here taught to pray that we may fulfil.

By whom is God's name to be hallowed? By ourselves; by others; by all men; by those especially who at present despise and condemn it; by those particularly whom we know to be neglecting this duty; by those who from their greater light and knowledge, or by their consecration to God, are more especially bound to honour and glorify His name.

How God's name is to be hallowed. By His being honoured and served by all His creatures, and particularly that those "who know God may glorify Him as God" (Romans i. 21),—and this in their words and lives. As the saints have aimed at doing every thing *ad maiorem Dei gloriam*, "to the greater glory of God," so we pray that, by directing our words and actions according to God's will, by dedicating ourselves to His service, by spreading the knowledge of God, and enforcing the observance of His laws, we may bring God's name to be more honoured and loved. St. Paul teaches us that we may glorify God by the commonest actions of our life, if they are done with the intention of pleasing God, and as He desires: "Whether you eat or drink, or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God."

Thy kingdom come. The word 'kingdom' has two meanings. Primarily it means that rule, dominion, or empire which a sovereign has over his subjects, and thence it has come secondly to mean the place or extent of territory over which such dominion is exercised. It is in the first and most correct sense that the word is used here. God's kingdom is threefold: 1st, His natural dominion over the world; 2dly, His dominion by grace; and 3dly, the kingdom of His glory in heaven with the saints. Now it cannot be the natural dominion of God over the world that is here meant; for this kingdom is not to come, but has ever existed and must always exist. "He doth according to His will, as well with the powers of heaven, as among the inhabitants of the earth" (Dan. iv. 32). The kingdom of God must, therefore, mean here the kingdom of grace, or of glory, or both. The Catechism, in explaining this petition, says, that "we pray that God may come and reign in our hearts by His grace, and

may bring us all hereafter to His heavenly kingdom. Some learned writers restrict the meaning of this petition to one of these senses; but there is nothing to prevent our using it sometimes in one sense, sometimes in another, according to circumstances.

As applied to grace, the word 'kingdom' is used in the same sense as when St. Paul says, "Let not sin reign in your mortal bodies" (Rom. vi. 12). And our Lord Himself explains the expression when He says, "The kingdom of God is within you" (St. Luke xvii. 21). As we speak of a man's being ruled by such and such a motive, or of his being under the dominion of a passion (2 Pet. ii. 19), so we are here taught to pray that God's grace and love may rule and have complete dominion over our hearts and those of all men, and of those especially for whom at the present moment we have most reason or desire to pray. We pray that it may have the sole sway over our lives and actions, and that all others may be brought into subjection to God. For the kingdom of grace, we must remember, is twofold; one inward in our hearts, and the other outward in the Church. And the first leads to the second. If our Lord established His Church as a kingdom on earth, yet He did not establish it at first, nor does He maintain it now, by force, but by the influence of grace on the hearts of men. Those who submit to this influence are they of whom the Church consists. Hence we pray in this petition for the increase of God's Church militant on earth. His kingdom has indeed begun; but there are still places in which as yet the Church has not taken root, because the hearts of the inhabitants are as yet uninfluenced by the power of grace. We pray, then, that God's kingdom may be enlarged in the world, and extend itself over those hearts and those countries where as yet it is unknown, until, as St. John saw in his vision, the kingdom of this world becomes the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ's (Apoc. xi. 15).

Some contend that this influence of grace on men's hearts is what we have already prayed for in the first petition, and that as the first petitions of the Lord's Prayer refer not to ourselves, but to God's glory and

honour, it is more natural to understand by the kingdom of God, His future kingdom of glory, when He shall come with all the saints. They say that, as in the first ages of the world all the just were "looking for the expectation of Israel," looking forward and praying for the coming of Christ and His kingdom, so in the latter days we are taught to look forward and to desire the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in His kingdom of glory. It is not a little confirmatory of this interpretation that the second coming of our Lord seems to have been always in the thoughts and aspirations of the early Christians. St. Paul speaks of the reward "that shall be given to all them that love Christ's coming" (2 Tim. iv. 8). And again he speaks of our being instructed to "look forward to the coming of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus ii. 13). And in the Apocalypse the souls cry out from under the altar in impatient desire of the coming of our Lord to judge the world, and to reign in manifest glory.

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Having in the first two petitions prayed for the promotion of God's glory, and the extension of His kingdom, we are next taught, in the third petition, to seek for that which is the way and means by which, as far as we are concerned, these two objects may be obtained. How can we promote them except by doing the will of our Father who is in heaven? We are not here concerned with the question of what is God's will, or how we can know it; but we are taught to seek for the disposition to follow it, howsoever, whensoever made known to us, and to follow it perfectly and willingly, as the blessed in heaven follow it. Nor is there any other way in which we can please God than by doing His will. "If you love Me," says our Blessed Lord, "keep My commandments."

But here a question meets us. Is not, then, God's will done on earth? God is almighty and doth His will, as Scripture says, "with the powers of heaven and the inhabitants of the earth." In what sense, then, do we pray that His will may be done? Is it not in God's hands that it should be done? To answer this, we must say that God's

will is indeed done, and His designs carried out, and His glory promoted, whatever we do. God overrules every thing to the fulfilment of His will, and turns even the actions of the wicked to account, making them take their place in doing His work. We have many striking examples of this in the Bible. For example: Joseph's brethren sold and ill-treated him; yet this was the very means by which the prophecy which God made to Abraham (Gen. xv. 13) was fulfilled. And Joseph, in speaking to his brethren of their having sold him, says, "God sent me before you into Egypt for your preservation" (Gen. xlv. 5). And again, St. Peter in his sermon on the Day of Pentecost says, "This same (Jesus) being delivered up by the determinate council and fore-knowledge of God, you by the hands of wicked men have crucified and slain" (Acts ii. 23). Here we see how God was carrying out His designs, without interfering with that free-will which He has given to man as part of his nature. It is not, therefore, in this sense that we pray that God's will may be done; but we pray that it may be done by us, and by others, "as it is in heaven" by the angels of God, "who do His will" (Ps. cii. 21); done, that is, intentionally, because it is God's will, perfectly, and cheerfully. Our Lord said that His food was to do the will of Him that sent Him (St. John iv. 34). So the angels' life and happiness is to fulfil the desire of Him whom they love; and we are taught in this petition to strive to imitate them, by seeking to do the will of God from the same motive and with the same cheerfulness. Nor must we forget that sufferings, trials, ill-treatment, even though arising from the wickedness of our fellow-men, are yet to us part of the will of God, since He permits them to happen to us; and therefore to take them cheerfully is also a way of doing His will.

CHAP. LXXXII. The Lord's Prayer: Second Part.

Give us this day our daily bread. This petition begins the second division of the Lord's Prayer, in which we pray for those things which more particularly concern ourselves, and hence the form of expression is altered. Before, there

has been no reference to the person praying. All was in reference to God's service and glory. Here first we speak of what is needed for "us."

Yet this petition follows in natural order from the last. In that we pray that we may do God's will, and so next we are taught to seek from God Himself that support which is necessary to enable us to do it. This is what is meant by the word 'bread.' Amongst ourselves, as well as in Scripture language, 'bread,' as the most ordinary and essential source of nourishment, is made to stand for food in general; and as we have two lives to keep up, that of the body and that of the soul, bread is here to be taken as the necessary food for both the one and the other. So the Catechism explains it; saying, that in this petition we ask for "all that is necessary for our souls and bodies." For this is the meaning of the word "our,"—that which we needs must have,—that which is necessary for our well-being.

We pray, then, for two things; primarily for the grace of God, which is the supernatural life of the soul, supporting and sustaining it, as natural food does the body. The greatest of all the means of grace is the bread of life in the Holy Eucharist; so that many have interpreted the expression as intended for this alone. Yet what our Lord says, that "not in bread alone doth man live, but in every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God" (St. Matt. iv. 4), is in point here. The Holy Eucharist is by far the greatest, but it is not the only means of grace. The word of God, as heard in the sacred Scriptures, in the voice of preachers, in spiritual books and guides, in the inspirations of the Holy Ghost, is the food of our souls. Grace, too, is obtained by prayer and other means, through warnings, examples, spiritual retreats, and peculiar and extraordinary ways. All these, therefore, as applicable to our state, and necessary for the support of our souls, are sought for in this petition. What we are taught in the Creed to believe, and are enjoined by the Commandments to perform, we are instructed to pray for in the Lord's Prayer.

But while the food of the soul is the first thing we ask for, we also here pray for that bread which is neces-

sary for our natural life. Yet still something is taught us at the same time about this. We do not merely ask for our bread, but our *daily* bread, that is, whatever is necessary for our present wants; leaving the future,—as our Lord instructed His disciples at the time He gave them this prayer (St. Matt. vi. 34),—to the providence of God, who cares for us; and not being solicitous about the morrow, because “sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.”

Lastly, our being taught to pray to God for the supply of our daily wants, is intended to lead us to a more religious and supernatural view of our daily life. Though the natural gifts of God, those things that are necessary for our bodies, are given to all alike,—God makes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends His rain on the just and the unjust,—yet the children of God are particularly called on to remember that nevertheless these are gifts which come immediately from Him, and which He may at any moment withdraw. And so while we rightly take ordinary care to provide “those things that be needful for the body,” yet, by being taught to seek them from God, we are continually reminded that, after all, every thing is in His hands, and comes from Him, and that we may labour and toil in vain for our daily bread, unless He sees fit to bless our efforts and to give it to us.

Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. In the first four petitions of the Lord’s Prayer, we ask of God to grant us all the good things that we need, whether spiritual or temporal; in the last three, beginning with this, we seek to be delivered from every thing evil, whether past or to come. And first, we ask to be delivered from past evil, that is, from the effects of our sins. In the Lord’s Prayer, as given us in St. Luke’s Gospel, the word here used is sins; as given in St. Matthew’s, it is debts; and in both the same metaphor is preserved by our asking to be forgiven, as we forgive our debtors. Sin, being called debt, teaches us that, like debt, it leaves effects and evil consequences behind it, which remain until they are taken away by the appointed means. Then, too, besides the effects of past sins, there are the

many sins which we and others are daily committing. And so we are here taught to pray that both we and they may be delivered from the guilt and punishment which belongs to us for them.

But there is one peculiarity in this petition. All other things we are taught to ask unconditionally; but this, we are reminded, will not be granted unless we forgive our neighbour. The parable of the two debtors (St. Matt. xviii. 24) is a complete explanation of this petition, and our Lord enforces the same doctrine in other places. In St. Mark xi. 25, "When you shall stand to pray, forgive if you have ought against any man, that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your sins." And again in St. Matt. v. 23. But one thing is to be observed: when we ask to be forgiven *as* we forgive our debtors, this does not mean in the same strict measure; for how can we hope to be so merciful and forgiving to others as we need that God should be to us? It is not, therefore, the measure of our being forgiven, but a condition of it. Our showing mercy to others is a condition of God's showing it to us, though God's mercy is infinite, and ours is very limited. But unless we do from our hearts forgive our enemies, or are at least striving to do so, we cannot hope that our own prayers for forgiveness will be answered, since we do not fulfil the required condition.

Lastly, while we pray for forgiveness, this does supersede the necessity of our using the means God has appointed for the remission of sins. They can only be forgiven by true sorrow, and through the Sacrament of Penance, if they are mortal; and the debt of punishment which still remains due to them must be cancelled by good works, by a patient endurance of sufferings, and by gaining indulgences. If we are in earnest in praying for the remission of our sins, we shall not neglect the means God has given us for this end. God, has shown His readiness to forgive us by dying on the cross for us; but we must do our part.

And lead us not into temptation. This petition seems to require explanation. How can we ask God not to lead us into temptation, when we know that God does not

tempt any man? "Let no man, when he is tempted," says St. James (i. 13), "say that he is tempted of God: for God is not a tempter of evils, and He tempteth no man." When, therefore, in this and other places God is spoken of as tempting man, it is not in the sense of inciting or impelling him to evil, but of permitting him to be tried. To be tried is not an evil. Our life is one of trial, in order that we may merit a future reward. Nay, it would seem that those who aim highest must expect the greatest trials. "My son, if thou come to serve the Lord, prepare thy soul for temptation," says Solomon; and again, "Gold is purged in the fire, and acceptable men in the furnace of affliction." But when temptation is spoken of, we must observe that the word includes two things: for temptation consists partly in certain circumstances in which we are placed,—circumstances of sickness, of poverty, of wealth, of temperament, of disposition, of accident,—which are innocent in themselves, and even ordained by God. These by themselves are not temptation, but are the subject-matter or occasions of temptation, which, however, cannot exist without them. To make them temptation, there must also be an incitement, prompted by the world, the flesh, or the devil, to use these occasions or circumstances contrary to God's will. And temptation in this sense cannot come from God. "Every man is tempted, being drawn away by his own concupiscence, and allured" (St. James i. 14). What, then, we pray for here is, that our Heavenly Father would not place us in those circumstances which will be the occasions of great temptation to us; that He would withdraw us from the occasions of sin; and that, knowing the weakness of His children, He would so order things as to keep them out of the reach of harm by sin,—just as we try to keep our own children out of the opportunities of evil, and all the more if we suspect their ability to protect themselves.

As each petition of the Lord's Prayer rests on some doctrine, and conveys, by implication, some special instruction, so this one teaches us, by its very form, the one infallible method of overcoming sin. We are not taught to pray for strength to prevail in the contest, but for the

opportunity of avoiding it. We are taught in this way to rest on our own weakness, and hence, because of our weakness, to seek of God that we may not even be led into the way of sin. We are not taught to go boldly in the way of temptation, but, like men who fear their own weakness, to avoid any occasion of sin, and even to pray against it. Thus it is that, with St. Paul, we can say, "When I am weak then am I strong." Our Lord taught even His Apostles to avoid sin in this way: "Pray," He said, "that you enter not into temptation;" and He added the reason,—*"the flesh is weak"* (St. Matt. xxvi. 41).

But deliver us from evil. It has been thought by some that this petition was only a sort of enlargement or explanation of the last; and that the words should be translated, from "the evil," that is, the Evil One, the Devil; for so the same expression is used in the 13th chapter of St. Matt. (v. 19). But the common explanation is that given by the Catechism, that we here beg of God that He would "free us from all evil of soul and body." Just as in the fourth petition we ask for every thing that is necessary both for soul and body, so here we pray to be defended from all those things that may be hurtful or injurious, first, to our souls, secondly, to our bodies.

But the very form of this petition is not without a meaning. For we are taught to pray to be delivered from evil without mentioning any particular evil, or defining what is evil. We leave God to judge what is evil for each one, ourselves and others, and only pray that whatever is evil we may be delivered from. Now evil is of two kinds, spiritual and temporal. Spiritual evil, or sin, is always an evil, and always a greater evil than any temporal evil. But temporal evil is not always an evil to us, nor is prosperity always a good to us. And it is only God who knows what will be a good or an evil to us. As children who know not what is good for them often ask for what would do them harm, and often fly from what would be for their benefit, so we too do not know what is for our greatest advantage, or what would do harm to us. Hence we are taught to leave all this to God, and merely to ask to be delivered from what is evil,—what God sees will be evil to us. And

while we use this prayer we should strive to act in accordance with it, by submitting ourselves entirely to His holy will, and being willing to suffer adversity of any kind, or even the loss of life if it will be for our spiritual benefit, or for God's greater glory.

CHAP. LXXXIII. Of the Hail Mary.

It has been the custom of the faithful from very early times to repeat the Hail Mary after the Lord's Prayer. "For since," says Cardinal Bellarmin, "we have no more powerful patron and advocate with our Lord than His Mother, therefore no sooner have we said the prayer which He Himself taught us than we forthwith turn to His Mother, that by her advocacy she may aid us to obtain those requests which we have just made in the Lord's Prayer. Just as in the world, when we have preferred any petition to a prince, we do not omit to intrust the care of our request to him who has most influence in his court." Another reason may be that, after the Our Father, no prayer has higher origin than the Hail Mary, it having been composed of that which was spoken by inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

This prayer has its most ordinary title, like so many other prayers, from the first words with which it begins; but it is also called the Angelical Salutation, because the first sentence consists of the words with which the Archangel saluted the Blessed Virgin when he came to announce to her that she was to be the Mother of God.

Though it is commonly divided into two parts, yet, for explanation, we may divide it into three, of which the first is the sentence just referred to, the second consisting of the words with which St. Elizabeth saluted the Blessed Virgin when she came to visit her; while the third part "was made by the Church of God, guided by the same Holy Spirit, against those who denied the Blessed Virgin to be the Mother of God." We may observe, that there is a natural order in the parts of the Hail Mary. As we honour the Blessed Virgin, first, on account of her own

purity and holiness, and, secondly, from her being the Mother of God, so the first sentence salutes her on the former of these titles, and the second on the latter; while the last part, taking them both up, entreates her all-powerful intercession as being both "Holy Mary" and "Mother of God."

The first sentence of the Hail Mary is given in the 1st chapter of St. Luke's Gospel, where it is related, that "the Angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, called Nazareth, to a Virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David: and the name of the Virgin was Mary. And the angel being come in, said to her: Hail full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women." The angel addresses the Blessed Virgin with this salutation, thus showing the joy that he felt in the beginning of this great work of redemption, and his reverence for the Blessed Virgin, as being the instrument chosen by God above all other creatures for its execution. This is one among the many instances we have showing how closely the angels are concerned with us, and with God's dealings towards us. The angel did not address the Blessed Virgin by name, but the word "Mary" (which signifies Lady or Mistress) was added by the Church. The next word, which has been translated "full of grace," has been the cause of a good deal of discussion; the Protestant translation rendering it "thou that art highly favoured;" but there is great authority for translating it "full of grace," since all the ancient writers do so with one accord, though, indeed, it is difficult to see how any conclusion contrary to the honour of the Blessed Virgin can be drawn from its being translated in the other way. The expression "full of grace" means, that she is enriched with every kind of grace befitting her position as Mother of God. Similar expressions are used about the saints; as, for example, about St. Stephen in the Acts; but this does not prove them to have received equal graces. They may have received all the grace that they were capable of receiving, while yet they had not that immense capacity for grace which the Blessed Virgin possessed; just as vessels of

different sizes may all be filled to their utmost extent, and yet some of them may hold much more than others. Who can doubt that she who was designed by God to fill so exalted a position as that of His Mother, would receive the largest measure of grace of which a creature was capable, so as to excite the admiration of the Archangel himself.

The next words, "the Lord is with thee," have been sometimes taken to mean that our Lord was about to be with her through her conceiving Him in her womb; but the more common and approved interpretation is, that it is an explanation of the words "full of grace," and means, not that she had conceived, or was about to conceive, Christ, which the angel speaks of further on, but that she was most pleasing in the sight of God, and was replenished with divine gifts. The same expression is used in several places in the Old Testament (Judges vi. 13; Ruth ii. 4). The angel's next words were, "Blessed art thou among women," i. e. above other women. The Blessed Virgin, in speaking of herself in the *Magnificat*, says, that from that time all generations shall call her blessed; viz. because she had been chosen above all other women to be the Mother of the promised Redeemer. But here the angel rather refers to that still greater blessedness which belonged to her from her sublime sanctity and purity, which was the cause of her being so elevated amongst women. For great as was the dignity of the Blessed Virgin as being Mother of God, we gather from the words of our Lord (St. Luke xi. 28) that it did not make her so blessed as being first in exact observance of God's holy law.

As the first part of the Hail Mary thus refers to the purity of the Blessed Virgin, so the second refers to her maternity. After the angel had announced to her that she was to be the Mother of God, and she had conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, Mary, we read, went with haste into the hill-country, to visit her cousin St. Elizabeth, who was to be the mother of St. John, the forerunner of our Lord. No sooner had Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary than St. John the Baptist leaped for joy in his mother's womb, and St. Elizabeth was filled

with the Holy Ghost. It was under this inspiration that she uttered those words which form a part of the Hail Mary: "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb." The Holy Name, which the Angel Gabriel had given to the Blessed Virgin, is not part of the exclamation of St. Elizabeth, but is inserted here by the Church. The words "fruit of the womb" are a common Hebrew expression for children. We find it in many passages of the Old Testament. When St. Elizabeth speaks of the blessedness of the Mother and the Son, it is another way of speaking of the blessedness of the Mother on account of the Son. And she attributes the miracle that had happened to the presence of "the Mother of her Lord:" "And whence is this to me that the Mother of my Lord should come to me; for behold, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy" (St. Luke i. 44). The whole of this scene of the Visitation is full of doctrine and of mystery, and seems to show us very perfectly how the Blessed Virgin, in the relations she holds to us, does not stand alone, but in connexion with our Lord. It is as bearing our Lord with her, and bringing Him to us, that she holds the preëminent position that belongs to her in the order of grace.

The third part of the Hail Mary consists of the words, "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us now and at the hour of our death. Amen." These did not originally form a part of the Angelical Salutation, but were added by the Church: the title of "Mother of God" having been solemnly decreed by the Council of Ephesus to be the rightful title of the Blessed Virgin. The occasion of this council being called was against the heresiarch Nestorius, who maintained, as a part of his heresy, that the Blessed Virgin was not entitled to be called "Mother of God," because she was only mother of His human nature. Yet she is called by St. Elizabeth, in St. Luke, "the Mother of my Lord;" and this title was confirmed, as properly belonging to her, by this Council of Ephesus in the year 431. It will be observed that we here address the Blessed Virgin under both the titles that she has to our homage, as 'Holy Mary' and as

Mother of God,' and that we are taught to ask her all-powerful intercession in our behalf, to obtain for us what is most essential for us in our present state, and especially to intercede for us at the hour of death. For the Blessed Virgin is in an especial manner the patroness of a good death, both on account of her own most holy and happy death, and also because we have no more efficacious means of obtaining the grace of perseverance, or of a holy death, than by the patronage and interest of the Blessed Mother of God in our behalf.

CHAP. LXXXIV. On Devotions in honour of the Blessed Virgin.

THE Catechism, after explaining the Hail Mary, asks the question, why we say the Hail Mary so often; and answers that it is for two reasons: to put us in mind of the Incarnation of God the Son, and to honour His Blessed Mother. It has been already said, that for many hundred years it has been the custom in the Church, after saying the Our Father, to recite the Hail Mary, as a means of commending those requests which we have just been making to the care and intercession of the Blessed Virgin, whose prayers are so far more efficacious than any that we can make. But there are some forms of devotion in honour of the Blessed Virgin which are very widely in use, and which consist principally of repetitions of the Hail Mary. The Catechism refers to these in the question, why we repeat the Hail Mary so often. The two principal ones are the Angelus and the Rosary. And in the explanation of these it will be at the same time seen how, in reciting the Hail Mary so frequently, we not only honour the Blessed Virgin, and show our confidence in her powerful intercession, but also are reminded of the Incarnation of the Son of God.

There is no occasion to explain how the devotion of the Rosary and the Angelus is practised, since every one knows it. But it is important to reflect that these two devotions, in which the Hail Mary is so frequently repeated, dwell particularly on the Incarnation of our Lord.

In the Angelus, so called from the first word with which the devotion begins, before each Hail Mary we repeat a versicle, recalling how the mystery of our Lord's coming into the world was announced to Mary, and how, on her giving her assent, the Incarnation of our Lord actually took place. And in the prayer at the end, we ask that as we have known the Incarnation of Christ "by the message of an angel, so, by His Passion and Cross, we may be brought to the glory of His Resurrection." The whole devotion in this way being occupied with the mysteries of our Lord's coming on the earth for our sake. And so it is with the Rosary. For the Rosary does not consist in simply reciting a certain number of Our Father's and Hail Mary's, but in reciting them with reference to certain mysteries of our Lord's Life and Passion. And so essential a part of the devotion is it to dwell on these mysteries, that without doing so to some extent the indulgences granted to the reciting of the Rosary cannot ordinarily be obtained.* In its integrity, then, the Rosary is a devotion on the Incarnation and earthly life of our Lord, in honour of the Blessed Virgin.

But why is it, then, that the Hail Mary is repeated rather than the Our Father, while the mysteries are meditated on? First, because the very words of the Hail Mary point to the subject. The Our Father has no direct reference to the Incarnation, but we cannot think of the words of the Hail Mary without being reminded of that mystery. If the Blessed Virgin was full of grace, it was to fit her to be the Mother of God. If she was "blessed among women," one great cause of her blessedness was because Jesus was "the fruit of her womb." If we call upon her as being nearest to the throne of God in heaven "to pray for us sinners," it is because she was of all creatures brought into the closest relations with God when He was sojourning upon earth; she tended Him in the cradle and stood next to Him on the Cross.

* Yet the *Raccolta*, after quoting a decree stating as a condition for gaining these indulgences, "that whilst the prayers are said meditation be made on the mysteries," adds, on the authority of Benedict XIII., "that simple people who cannot meditate may obtain the indulgence by merely saying the Rosary devoutly."

And this reminds us of another reason why the Hail Mary should be so fitting a prayer to recite while we call to mind the mysteries of our Lord's Incarnation and life. To bring home these mysteries to our hearts, we need to think of them as if we ourselves had witnessed them, as those did who were the chosen friends and attendants of our Lord. We want to be present in the stable at Bethlehem, and see our Lord in the crib, as the shepherds did,—to stand like St. John within sight of Him when He was scourged or nailed to the Cross,—or to see Him risen in His glorified Body, like Magdalen at the sepulchre. “But there is One who had a share in these and all other such scenes, through whose eyes we should all be glad to view them, in whose heart we should long to feel them.... The maternal heart alone can contain the ocean of bitterness, or the heaven of joy, which these various mysteries were fitted to create. And hence the natural desire of loving souls to be its associate, and to stand with its venerable possessor, in sight of all she saw, in hearing of all she heard, and in observance of all she laid up in her heart. This is, then, the devotion which the Church of God proposes to us in the Rosary, the contemplation of the mysteries of this threefold portion of our Redeemer's life (*i. e.* the joyful, sorrowful, and glorious mysteries) in connexion and sympathy with His loving Mother's feelings in each. It is essentially directed to Him, being, in fact, the noblest and perfectest way of meditating on Him.”*

The custom of reciting the Angelical Salutation and other prayers on beads is very ancient. Some of the oldest ecclesiastical historians speak of its having been the custom of the ancient hermits to keep the reckoning of their prayers in this way. And there is a canon of a council held in England in the year 816 which speaks of reciting prayers on belts or girdles. But the Rosary, in its present form, is with good reason attributed to St. Dominic, who first introduced its use in the south of France in the thirteenth century. It is said that when he was preaching and exerting all his great powers to refute and put down the Albigenses, the Blessed Virgin ap-

* Wiseman's Essays, vol. i. pp. 498, 9.

peared to him, and revealed to him this form of devotion, which she declared would be most acceptable to her Divine Son and herself, and would be of great efficacy against the heresy then so powerful. Ever since then this devotion has been a popular one in the Church, and the Supreme Pontiffs have encouraged it, by repeatedly annexing fresh indulgences to its recitation. There is also a festival instituted in its honour, which is kept on the first Sunday in October.

The term Chaplet or Rosary is derived, according to the opinion of learned men, from its being the custom to offer crowns or chaplets of roses to distinguished persons; and from this the devotion of holy men inspired them with the idea of offering to God and our Blessed Lady chaplets woven, not with material flowers, but with divine praises and with prayers. There are many other rosaries besides the first and ordinary one. The most important of them are the Rosary of the Seven Dolours and the Brigidine Rosary.

CHAP. LXXXV. On Grace.

At the beginning of the Catechism we were taught that God "made us to know Him, love Him, and serve Him in this world, and be happy with Him for ever in the next." But are we able by our own natural powers to do these things and reach that end? Can we believe, hope, love, and keep God's law in such a way as to deserve heaven? Most certainly not. The right of seeing God in Himself belongs to God alone, and no creature, as such, can have any claim to that bliss, nor consequently to the means which lead thereto. By our own natural strength we may acquire many virtues, and gain much knowledge about the things of this life. We may recognise God as the Author and Preserver of our being, and love Him as such; but we can never know and love Him in such a way as to deserve to see Him face to face. For this we need a higher principle than nature,—gifts far beyond any of those, wonderful as they are, which God has bestowed on

us by creation. We must be put in a new relation towards God,—a relation not of mere servants, but of sons,—in order to have any title to the kingdom of heaven. That principle is what we mean by grace, and this relation is called a state of grace; or, as Holy Scripture calls it, a state of adoption of sons.

Adam was from the beginning thus privileged; God made him His son, and enabled him to win heaven by obedience. But Adam disobeyed, and fell back into the state of a mere creature and servant; and as he stood for us all, we all fell through him; we were removed afar off, and became strangers,—aliens from the household of God,—and were utterly unable to recover our position. But God did not so leave us. “He so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but should have everlasting life” (St. John iii.). In the merits of that Son He has given us back those gifts we lost in Adam. He has restored us, or put us in the way of being restored, once more to His friendship. He has given us again power to become His sons, and rendered us capable of fulfilling the old law in such a way as to deserve the enjoyment of Him in heaven.

We are now in a position to understand what is meant by grace. It stands for all those gifts, over and above the gifts of creation, which God of His free mercy has bestowed on us, in order to raise us to a state of adoption, and enable us to reach by obedience the enjoyment of Himself in heaven. The word, as signifying that which is freely given, might be applied to all we have received as well in the natural as the supernatural order. For it was out of God’s pure goodness that we were created. His love alone preserves us. Our life, our health, our strength, the faculties of our bodies and souls, are freely bestowed without our having any claim to them, and therefore are graces. Nevertheless, according to the usage of Holy Scripture, grace is commonly limited, as defined above, to those gifts which God grants us through the merits of Jesus Christ for our salvation. In this restricted sense grace is distinguished from, and contrasted with, nature.

Whatever is of nature is thereby not of grace; and grace not only cannot be merited by nature, not only goes beyond nature, but is out of all proportion to it,—is not merely an assistance, but an addition of something new, something wholly different in kind. If God were to give a man the power of walking one hundred miles an hour, He would be but increasing a power already possessed; but were He to give him the power of flying, He would be bestowing an entirely new faculty. In such a way is grace beyond nature. That we should perform good works meritorious of heaven, is as far beyond the spiritual capacity of our souls, as the power of flying is beyond the physical capacity of our bodies.

Since the Fall, too, we should not forget that we are not only not worthy, but that we are positively unworthy of grace; we have not only done nothing by which to claim it, but we have done much to demerit it. So that grace is not merely a work of God's goodness, but also of His mercy and compassion. "God," says the Apostle, "who *is rich in mercy*, of His exceeding charity wherewith He loved us, when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together in Christ, and made us sit together in the heavenly places through Christ Jesus" (Eph. ii. 4-6). "Not by works of justice we had done, but *according to mercy* He saved us" (Tit. iii. 5). "A faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into this world to save sinners" (1 Tim. i. 15). "God commendeth His charity towards us; because *when as yet we were sinners*, according to the time, Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 8, 9). "Where sin abounded, grace did more abound" (Rom. v. 20).

Holy Scripture every where testifies both to the necessity and gratuitousness of grace. "No man can come unto Me except My Father draw him" (St. John vi. 44). "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in Me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in Me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit; for without Me ye can do nothing" (St. John xv. 4, 5). "All have sinned, and do need the

glory of God. Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.... Where is then thy boasting? It is excluded" (Rom. iii. 23, 24, 27). "If by grace, it is not now by works: otherwise grace is no more grace" (Rom. xi. 6). "Who hath distinguished thee? what hast thou that thou hast not received? and if thou hast received, why dost thou glory as though thou hast not received?" (1 Cor. iv. 7.) "By grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, for it is the gift of God" (Eph. ii. 8).

CHAP. LXXXVI. On the Division of Grace.

As the gifts which God bestows to raise us to a supernatural union with Himself, and bring us to heaven, are partly without us and partly within us, grace first of all admits of being divided into outward and inward grace. Outward grace includes all those things which are for our salvation, and which do not directly affect the substance of the soul; as, for instance, the establishment of the Church, the preaching of the Gospel, the law, miracles, &c.

Inward grace includes those gifts which are within the soul, and affect it. Some of these are given mainly for our own sakes; some chiefly for the sake of our neighbour. The latter, as having no distinctive title, and as being the less noble class, appropriate the common name of *grace*, and are called "*graces gratuitously bestowed*;" just as brutes are called animals as distinguished from men. The Apostle St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, enumerates them as follows:

"The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man unto profit. To one is given the word of wisdom; to another, the word of knowledge; to another, faith; to another, the grace of healing; to another, the working of miracles; to another, prophecy; to another, discerning of spirits; to another, diverse kinds of tongues; to another, the interpretation of speeches" (1 Cor. xii. 7-10).

The wicked as well as the good may have these graces. Our Lord tells us that many will say at the day of judgment, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name, and cast out devils in Thy name, and in Thy name done many miracles? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, you that work iniquity" (St. Matt. vii. 22, 23).

In order to render the soul pleasing in His sight, God both acts upon it and abides within it. The result in the former case is called actual grace, in the latter, habitual. The two are distinguished as an act from a habit, as that which is passing from that which is permanent. Actual grace, then, may be defined as the action of the Holy Ghost upon the soul; habitual, as the state of the soul possessed by God.

God begins the work of the supernatural in the soul by touching the heart through the illumination of the Holy Ghost.* He suggests a holy thought; He moves the heart; He proffers assistance by which the will may choose aright. All this is on God's side, anticipating and independent of any coöperation on our part. God then waits to see whether we will correspond with what He has done or not: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man will hear My voice and open the door, I will come in to him and sup with him, and he with Me" (Apoc. iii. 20). We are free to reject the inspiration and refuse to let Christ in, or we can adopt it, and make it our own by the assent of our will. And then God will supply further grace to sustain our choice, and enable us to carry out the good resolution we have formed. The grace which precedes the deliberate action of the will is called, according to the different aspects under which we view it, "preventing," "exciting," "operating;" while that which comes after is called "subsequent," "assisting," "coöperating" grace. We need, however, a still further grace to heal the instability and capriciousness of the will. When we have done the same thing over and over again we feel a disgust and weariness, especially if the thing is good, and still more if it is good in the super-

* Council of Trent, sess. vi. c. 5.

natural order; so that the best of us would soon leave off corresponding with grace, and fall back, if God did not stand by and succour us with a special help. This help is what we mean by the grace of perseverance. It is that grace which enables us to go on from grace to grace, until we lay hold on eternal life. On it our salvation depends. "He that perseveres to the end shall be saved." It is a gift which God keeps in His own hands. It cannot be merited, but it may infallibly be obtained by prayer and obedience. As it is of faith that the sinner cannot of himself rise out of a state of sin, so it is of faith that a just man cannot continue in a state of justice without the special grace of God.

CHAP. LXXXVII. On the Distribution of Grace.

HOLY SCRIPTURE tells us that God wills all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. ii. 4); that "God so loved *the world* as to give His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but might have life everlasting; for God sent not His Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world through Him might be saved" (St. John iii. 16, 17). "As I live, saith the Lord, I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked should turn from his way and live" (Ezekiel xxxiii. 11). "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 St. John ii. 2). "Thou sparest all, because they are Thine, O Lord, who lovest souls" (Wisdom xi. 27).

"Say not, It is through God that she (Wisdom) is not with me; for do not thou the things that He hateth. Say not, He hath caused me to err; for He hath no need of wicked men. The Lord hateth all abomination of error; and they that fear Him shall not love it. God made man in the beginning, and left him in the hand of his own counsel. He added His commandments and precepts. If thou wilt keep the commandments and perform acceptable fidelity for ever, they shall preserve thee. He hath

set fire and water before thee: stretch forth thy hand to which thou wilt. Before man is life and death, good and evil; that which he shall choose shall be given him. For the wisdom of God is great, and He is strong in power, seeing all men without ceasing. The eyes of the Lord are towards them that fear Him, and He knoweth all the work of man. He desireth not a multitude of faithless and unprofitable children" (Ecclus. xv. 11-22).

From these and innumerable other passages,—from the whole tenor of revelation,—from our knowledge of God's character,—we infer that God sincerely wills the salvation of every responsible being; and consequently, that He supplies grace, whereby each could be saved if he pleased, and that it is through his own fault if he is lost.

All, indeed, have not the same amount of grace. God distributes to each one as He wills. The Jews had more grace than the heathen; Christians have more grace than the Jews; some individuals have more than others. But he who has least has enough, and more than enough, for salvation; and he who has most will have to give the strictest account. "For to whom much is given, of the same will much be required" (St. Luke xii. 48).

It is doubtful whether certain hardened and blinded sinners are not, as a punishment for their sins, abandoned by God, and condemned, as it were, before their death. Certainly there are some very awful passages of Holy Scripture which seem to favour such a view. Nevertheless the more common opinion is, that no one, however bad, is entirely deprived of grace, so as not to have the power of repenting if he wills.

CHAP. LXXXVIII. On Habitual Grace.

THE end of all God's gracious dealings with us in the spiritual order being to restore us to that likeness of Himself which we lost in Adam, to bring us back to a state of friendship, adoption, and holiness, preparatory to a state of glory in heaven, it is not sufficient that He should act

upon the soul; He must needs abide within it, change it; imprint upon it a fixed quality, in value of which it may be called a friend, a child, an heir of heaven, and holy. This renovation of the soul is called habitual or sanctifying grace, and the process of being brought to this state is what we mean by justification.

Habitual or sanctifying grace is a participation of the Divine nature,—the highest communication of Himself which God can make to the soul of a mere creature, causing it to share in those acts, whereby God knows, loves, and enjoys Himself. This exceeding dignity is granted only for the Passion and Death of Jesus Christ, and in virtue of our union with Him. We cannot even with actual grace do any thing beforehand to merit it, although with such grace we can and must dispose ourselves for its reception. Protestants make faith the sole condition on our part of justification, meaning by faith a feeling of confidence that we are saved through Christ. But the Catholic Church, following Holy Scripture, teaches that a sinner must be truly penitent before he can be put into a state of grace. He must turn away in his heart from his wickedness, and have a real purpose of doing justice and judgment (Ezechiel xviii. 27); and penitence implies more than faith or trust in Christ. The Council of Trent describes as follows the manner in which the soul is prepared for justification:

1. It conceives faith by hearing, and, being freely moved towards God, believes those things to be true which have been revealed and promised; and this especially, that the impious is justified of God by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

2. It is sensible of sin, and consequently fears the divine justice.

3. It is raised into hope by considering the mercy of God through Christ.

4. It begins to love God as the fountain of justice.

5. It is moved against sin with a certain hatred and detestation.

6. It proposes to receive the Sacraments of justification, and lead a new life.

The Council does not mean to say that such is the precise course which every sinner must go through, or that each one of these acts is necessary. We may be sorry for sin from other supernatural motives than fear. We might rise at once to an act of love without going through the stage of hope; but it lays down this as a specimen of the kind of preparation necessary. The only dispositions absolutely necessary for justification are faith,—without which it is impossible to please God,—and penitence, which, the Council of Trent says, always has been necessary in order to obtain grace and justice.

Justification,—the process in which we are endowed with sanctifying grace, in the words of the same Council,—“is the translation from that state in which a man is born a child of the first Adam, into a state of grace and of the adoption of sons of God through the second Adam, Jesus Christ our Saviour.” It consists in our being made members of Christ. Christ and the faithful are thereby knit together into one body, He the head, and they the members. And in virtue of this union we receive forgiveness of sin and sanctification, together with all other graces which are stored up in Christ, to be communicated to us through His Spirit. Because He is the beloved, we are accepted in Him (Eph. i. 6). Because He is by nature a Son, we in Him are children by adoption; because He is the Heir, we also in Him have an inheritance in the heavens: “If children then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ” (Rom. viii. 17). And so Holy Scripture describes our justification as a putting on Christ (Rom. xiii. 14); as being baptised in Christ Jesus (vi. 3); as casting off the old man, and putting on the new man (Eph. iv. 22); as being in Christ (Rom. viii. 1); as Christ dwelling in us and we in Him through the Spirit: “Now we know that we dwell in Him and He in us by the Spirit He hath given us” (1 John iii. 24); as Jesus Christ being in us (2 Cor. xiii. 5): “Know ye not that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates;” as our being the members of Christ (1 Cor. vi. 15, xii. 27); as being members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones (Eph. v. 30). It ascribes our spiritual life to our union with Christ:

"Our life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. iii. 3); "I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. ii. 20; John vi. 57, xiv. 19). The difference between the Catholic doctrine and the Protestant on the nature of justification lies precisely in this: that whereas the latter maintains that justification is simply the gift of pardon, without interior sanctification, the former declares that it is not merely the remission of sin, but also the sanctification and renewal of the inward man, through the voluntary reception of the grace and gift whereby man from unjust becomes just,—from being an enemy a friend,—that so he may be an heir according to the hope of eternal life.*

CHAP. LXXXIX. On Merit.

MERIT is the proportion which may exist between an action and its reward. When we do any act sufficiently good to be rewarded with any special thing, our act is said to be worth, or to merit that thing. Now one of the principal effects of sanctifying grace is, that it not only makes us holy, but enables us to perform actions sufficiently holy to deserve eternal life; and this by the appointment and promise of God. For God, having set heaven before us as a prize to be won (1 Cor. ix. 24; Phil. iii. 14), as a crown of justice to be striven for, thereby renders us capable of so running as to obtain, of so striving lawfully as to be crowned justly (2 Tim. ii. 5, iv. 8). The Apostle says, "God is not unjust that He should forget our work, and the love which we have shared in His name" (Heb. vi. 10). So that we have in some sense a title in justice to be rewarded for our good works. We must, however, remember that the merit of our actions is in itself a gift of God, who for the sole merits of His Son, and because of our union with Him, bestows on them a worth which they are very far from having in themselves. "Jesus Christ Himself," says the Council of Trent, "as the head into the members, and the vine into the branches, continually

* Council of Trent, sess. vi. c. 7.

causes His virtue to flow into the just, which virtue always goes before, accompanies, and follows after, their good works, without which they could not be in any way pleasing and meritorious before God." So that the merit of an action is not our own, as though it came from us; it is infused into us from God; and yet it is our own, because God has really made it over to us. "His goodness towards men is so great, that He will have the things which are His own gifts to be their own merits," and in crowning our merits He crowns His own gifts. We see at once that there is nothing here derogatory to the merits of Christ, or favourable to human pride.

In order to merit: 1, we must be in a state of grace; for it is, as we have said, grace which dignifies our actions. He who is not a living member of Christ cannot bring forth the fruits of justice. "Abide in Me, and I in you," says our Lord; "as the branch cannot bear fruit except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in Me." Before justification, then, we cannot, properly speaking, merit; nor can we merit the first grace of justification itself. But when we are justified we can merit an increase of that grace, and a corresponding grade of glory.

2. The act must be done freely, not on compulsion or of necessity, otherwise it will have no moral character at all.

3. It must be done for God, or it will not be supernatural; and there is no proportion between natural goodness and heaven. Some go so far as to say that those acts alone merit, which are done out of a motive of pure charity, or for the love of God; but this opinion is not so certain.

4. There must be a promise on the part of God, for we can have no claim on God except by His own free appointment.

5. It is only during this present life that we can merit; for God has willed that after death our condition should be fixed. As the tree falls, so shall it lie; and of those who die in the Lord it is said that they cease from their labours, and their works do follow them; so that neither

the souls in Purgatory nor the blessed in heaven can merit. In the strictest sense of the word we can merit only for ourselves, the first value of the action being exhausted by the reward of heaven; but as we are certain that God will hear our prayers, not only on our own behalf, but also on behalf of others, so there are not wanting examples in Holy Scripture which convince us that out of His bounty He will accept in like manner the good deeds of the just, and visit with His grace those for whom they are offered. He would have pardoned Sodom and Gomorrah had there been ten just men therein. He rejected the three friends of Job in their own persons, but accepted the sacrifice of the holy man in their behalf. The Lord, it is said, accepted the face of Job, and was turned at his penance.

The principal means of grace are prayer and the Sacraments. The former have been already treated of; it remains to treat of the latter.

CHAP. XC. On the Sacraments.

I. BEFORE treating of the Sacraments in detail, it will be well for us to consider the general truths which are common to all the Sacraments. In the words of the Catechism, "A Sacrament is an outward sign of inward grace, ordained by Christ, by which grace is given to our souls." From this definition, it will be seen that three things are required to constitute a Sacrament.

1. The outward sign.
2. The institution of Christ.
3. The power of giving grace.

1. By an outward sign is meant something which we can perceive by one or other of our senses, and which makes known to us something else which we do not perceive. Thus, if we see footprints, we know some one has passed on the road; or, if we see smoke coming out of a chimney, we know that there is a fire inside the house. So, in like manner, the pouring of water, or outward washing in baptism, is a sign of the inward cleansing of the soul from original sin. A Sacrament, therefore, is called an outward

or sensible sign, because it consists of something which can be perceived by one or other of our senses, and which represents the invisible effect produced in the soul. The outward part of the Sacrament is usually divided into matter and form. The matter is the thing used, together with the application of it to the person who is to receive the Sacrament, and the form is the words accompanying the application of the matter. Thus, in baptism, the outward pouring of water on the head of the child constitutes the matter; and the words, "I baptise thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," the form of the Sacrament.

2. As the Sacraments are the channels of divine grace, and the means by which the merits of Christ are applied to the soul, our Lord alone has power to ordain Sacraments. For as there is no natural connection between the outward rite or ceremony which is performed and the invisible effect produced in the soul, the Sacraments derive all their virtue and efficacy from the free choice and appointment of Christ, who has ordained them as the means or instruments for applying His merits to our souls. He might, had He so chosen, have adopted other ways of bringing home to us the fruit of His Passion; but as, in point of fact, He has instituted the Sacraments for this purpose, it is our duty humbly and thankfully to adore the dispositions of His providence, and to make the best use in our power of the fountains of grace and salvation with which we are furnished.

3. The Sacraments are not empty signs, but they have the power of producing the effects which they signify. Thus in baptism the pouring of water accompanied by the words, "I baptise thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," not only denotes the cleansing of the soul, but really produces it. This effect is due to the Sacrament as the appointed channel for conveying to us the merits of Christ, and not to the dispositions of the recipient. These dispositions are required in order to remove obstacles to the reception of divine grace, and as conditions without which the Sacraments will not produce their effect, but they are not the

causes of the grace which we receive. Thus, for example, the sun is the cause of the light inside a room ; but if there were no window the light could not enter, no matter how brightly the sun might be shining outside. The window is not the cause of the light, but only a condition without which it will not enter. For, however clear the glass may be, no light will come into the room if there be none outside. So is it with the Sacraments. They contain grace, which is the light and the life of the soul ; but if the proper dispositions are wanting, it cannot enter within us. Moreover if the window be covered all over with black paint, it will admit no light ; and if it be slightly stained or covered with dust, the light will come in less abundantly. So too the soul which is covered with the black stain of mortal sin unrepented of, cannot receive the grace of the Sacraments, while grace enters, yet less abundantly, when the soul is stained with venial guilt.

II. There are seven Sacraments, viz.: Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Holy Order, and Matrimony. As the Sacraments are free institutions of Christ, He might have appointed any number He chose ; but, as a matter of fact, seven have been instituted, neither more nor less, as the Church has always believed and taught, and as we shall see in detail in treating of them one by one. But though there is no absolute reason, except the divine appointment, why there should be seven rather than any other number of Sacraments, the Catechism of the Council of Trent points out that there is a fitness in this number, inasmuch as the seven Sacraments supply the wants of our spiritual life, which correspond to the wants of our bodily life. In order that the world may go on, it is necessary that men should be born, that they should grow up, that they should have food and nourishment, that they should be provided with medicine in time of sickness, that they should have help and support in old age, that there should be rulers to preserve order, and that one generation should succeed another. So in the spiritual life we are born to grace in Baptism, we are made strong and perfect by Confirmation, we receive food and nourishment in

the Blessed Eucharist, we have a sovereign remedy against sin in the Sacrament of Penance, we are protected and helped in our last illness by Extreme Unction, we are provided with spiritual rulers in Holy Order, and in Matrimony God gives His blessing to the union which is to furnish a succession of children for the Church.

Each one of the Sacraments, therefore, has a peculiar object and excellence of its own, distinct from all the others. All of them are necessary for the Church as a body, but they are not all necessary for each of its members. They are not all equal either in necessity or excellence. Baptism is the most necessary of the Sacraments, because without it we cannot enter the kingdom of heaven; and the Blessed Eucharist is the most excellent of all the Sacraments, because it contains Jesus Christ Himself, the fountain and source of all grace, while the other Sacraments are only channels of divine grace.

III. Subject of the Sacraments. Five of the Sacraments were instituted for the benefit of all the faithful who have come to the years of discretion, and stand in need of them; viz. Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Penance, and Extreme Unction; the remaining two, Holy Order and Matrimony, are restricted to those who desire to enter either the clerical or the married state.

To understand the dispositions which are necessary for the reception of the Sacraments, we must distinguish between the *valid* and the *lawful or fruitful* use of the Sacraments. A Sacrament is valid when the matter and form instituted by Christ are duly applied by the minister of the Sacrament to one who is capable and willing to receive it. A Sacrament is received lawfully, when, in addition to what is required for its valid reception, there are also in the recipient the dispositions required to obtain the grace of the Sacrament. Thus, he who received confirmation in the state of mortal sin would receive a valid Sacrament, that is to say, he would be really confirmed; but instead of receiving the grace of confirmation he would commit a sacrilege. If, however, he were in a state of grace when he was confirmed he would receive the Sacrament both validly and lawfully, or, in other words, he

would be really confirmed, and would really receive the grace attached to this Sacrament. Hence it will be seen, a Sacrament may be received validly without being received lawfully, but it cannot be received lawfully without also being received validly. For the valid reception of baptism in adults an intention to receive it is all that is absolutely necessary on the part of the subject or recipient; but for the other Sacraments, besides the intention, it is also necessary to have received baptism, and with regard to the Sacrament of penance other dispositions are required, as will be explained in its proper place. It will be more convenient to enumerate the conditions which we should bring with us, in order to receive the Sacraments with fruit, when we consider each Sacrament separately.

IV. The minister of the Sacraments. It is not intended to explain here who is the proper minister of the Sacraments, but to point out what is required on his part for the due discharge of his ministry. For the valid administration of a Sacrament, the minister must use the matter and form instituted by Christ, and have the intention of doing what the Church does and Christ ordained. If the matter be changed in substance, or be mixed with other matter, so that it is no longer in common estimation the same that was ordained by Christ; there is no Sacrament. In like manner, if the words of the form be so altered as no longer to express the same meaning as the true form, there is no Sacrament. Finally, there is no Sacrament, if the minister does not intend to do what the Church does and Christ ordained. Thus, for example, in baptism there is no Sacrament if wine be used instead of water; or if the words "I baptise," or the name of any of the Three Persons, be omitted in the form, or if the ceremony of baptism be performed simply with the intention of instructing the bystanders how to give baptism.

The minister of the Sacraments represents the Person of Christ, and therefore, provided he use the right matter and form and intend to do what the Church does, his own bad disposition—for example, want of faith or of the state of grace—will not affect his ministration, so far as the

recipient is concerned ; but he would commit a great sin by treating such holy things with disrespect.

V. The effects of the Sacraments. All the Sacraments either give or increase sanctifying or habitual grace in those who receive them with proper dispositions. Two of them, viz. baptism and penance, were instituted to give sanctifying grace to those who do not already possess it. They are intended to raise the soul from the death of sin to the life of grace, and hence they are called Sacraments of the dead. If, however, they are received by persons who already possess sanctifying grace, they increase it. The other Sacraments presuppose the supernatural life of grace in the soul as a disposition for their lawful reception, and therefore are called Sacraments of the living. They are consequently intended to increase the grace which the recipient already possesses. The Sacraments of the living may, however, according to the commonly received opinion, accidentally remit mortal sin, and restore the spiritual life of the soul. For example, if a person believing himself in the state of grace, but in reality having some hidden mortal sin on his soul, were to receive a Sacrament of the living with, at least, attrition, it is generally believed that he would obtain the pardon of his hidden sin. This opinion rests on the teaching of the Council of Trent, that the Sacraments infallibly produce their effect in those who do not place an obstacle in the way. For those who are not aware that they are in the state of sin, and who have attrition, cannot be said to place an obstacle in the way of the fruitful reception of the Sacraments.

The habitual grace which is given to the soul when it is raised from spiritual death to spiritual life is called first grace, and every increase of that grace is called second grace. Hence it is commonly said the Sacraments of the dead impart first grace, and the Sacraments of the living second grace.

A second effect of the Sacraments is that which is called sacramental grace. It has already been stated that each of the Sacraments is instituted for some particular end, which is different from that of any of the other Sacraments. Now, by sacramental grace is meant a title to

certain actual graces, to enable us to live up to the end of the Sacrament which we have received. Thus confirmation gives us a title to actual graces, to help us to profess our faith in spite of opposition. The Sacrament of penance not only remits past guilt, but also gives us a title to actual graces to preserve us from a relapse into sin.

Baptism, confirmation, and holy order produce a third effect, which is called a character. It is a spiritual mark or seal indelibly impressed on the soul, and distinguishes those who have received these Sacraments from those who have not, and fits them for the reception or the performance of certain spiritual functions. Thus baptism marks us as the children of God, and makes us capable of receiving the other Sacraments; confirmation enrolls us among the soldiers of Christ, and enables us to fight in His service; and holy order distinguishes those who receive this Sacrament as the ministers of Christ, and gives them power to perform their sacred duties. As the character can never be effaced, these three Sacraments cannot be repeated.

Here the question will naturally arise, how are persons who have had the misfortune to receive these Sacraments unworthily afterwards to obtain the benefit of them? As they have been validly received they contain grace, but this grace remains in abeyance until the soul recovers the friendship of God by true repentance. So long as the necessary dispositions are wanting in the soul, the grace of these Sacraments remains, like a stream which cannot flow on in its natural channel on account of some obstruction which it meets, but as soon as the obstacle is removed it resumes its natural course. Thus, he who receives confirmation in a state of mortal sin, would not receive any habitual grace till the sin had been remitted, either by an act of perfect contrition, or by the worthy reception of the Sacrament of penance. But as soon as the impediment was removed by the forgiveness of sin, the grace belonging to confirmation would be bestowed on the soul.

VI. Ceremonies and Sacramentals. In addition to the matter and form of the Sacraments, there are a number of rites and ceremonies which always accompany their solemn

administration and reception. These ceremonies form no essential part of the institution of Christ, most of them having been added by the Apostles or the Church; and consequently they may be omitted without interfering with the validity of the Sacraments. But as they are prescribed by the Church, acting under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in order the better to show forth the dignity and the effects of the Sacraments, and to dispose us to receive them in a more perfect manner, they cannot be omitted, except in case of necessity, without sin.

Besides the Sacraments, there are certain practices of piety and helps to devotion, which, on account of a certain similarity to the Sacraments, are commonly called sacramentals. Thus, almsgiving, the recital of prayers, and especially of the "Our Father," the general confession of sins, and the use of things blessed by the Church, are examples of sacramentals. The great difference between these and real Sacraments is, that the Sacraments were instituted by Christ as the channels of grace, which they infallibly produce in all who receive them in due dispositions; whereas sacramentals do not of themselves give grace, but in virtue of the prayers of the Church help to excite in the soul the good dispositions, which obtain for us the remission of venial sin, and render us more pleasing in the sight of God. For instance, when we take holy water on entering into a church, it does not remit sin in the same way that baptism does, but it is a means of appropriating the prayers the Church uses in blessing it in order to obtain the purity and cleanness of heart which we should possess when we appear in the presence of God. It thus disposes us to make acts of humility, of repentance, and sorrow for sin, and prepares us to obtain forgiveness. In the Sacraments, therefore, the effect is immediately due to the institution of Christ; in the sacramentals, the immediate effect results from the good dispositions which the devout use of them helps by way of suffrage to produce in the soul.

CHAP. XCI. On Baptism: its Definition, Institution, Necessity, Matter, Form, &c.

THE general explanation of the Sacraments will naturally be followed by an account of each one in particular. Baptism comes first; for it is the beginning of the spiritual life. It admits us into the kingdom of heaven,—gives us access to the other Sacraments, as without it we cannot receive any one of them validly.

Baptism is a Greek word, which signifies “washing.” The Church specifically uses it to denote that sacramental action whereby a person is made a Christian, and is washed from his sins. It is defined in the common Catechism as “a Sacrament by which we are made Christians, children of God, and members of the Church;” and in that of Trent, as “the Sacrament of water in the word.” It was anciently known by other names besides baptism: St. Austin speaks of it as the Sacrament of Faith, because faith is specially professed therein. It was called “illumination,” for by it we are “called out of darkness into a marvellous light” (1 Pet. ii. 9); and under this title it is alluded to in the Epistle to the Hebrews (ch. x. 32). It was also termed a purgation, because thereby we “purge out the old leaven, that we may be a new paste” (1 Cor. v. 7). The time of its institution is not quite certain; most probably it was before our Lord’s resurrection, and at the time of His own baptism in the Jordan. The Gospels tell us that our Lord baptised at the beginning of His public ministry by means of His disciples; and we can scarcely suppose that He baptised with an inferior kind of baptism, still less with that of St. John the Baptist. We notice, too, in the baptism of our Lord all the essentials of true baptism: the matter, in the water consecrated, by contact with the Sacred Humanity, to the washing away of sins; the form, designated in the presence of the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity,—for the Father is recognised in the voice, “This is My beloved Son,” the Son is visibly present as man, the Holy Ghost is seen in form of a dove descending and abiding upon our Lord;—lastly, the effect of the Sacrament is manifest in the opening of the heavens. But

whether instituted before or not, it is certain that baptism was not promulgated, or made generally obligatory, until our Lord after His resurrection bade His Apostles "Go and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (St. Matt. xxviii. 19).

Any water properly so called, whether blessed or not, is the valid matter for the Sacrament; but water consecrated with a peculiar rite and with holy oils is the *proper* matter for solemn baptism, *i. e.* baptism performed with the ceremonies. Ordinary holy-water is used for private baptisms.

The form is, "I baptise thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." It expresses (1) the action of washing, by the words, "*I baptise*;" (2) the person baptised, by the word "*thee*;" (3) the united authority of each of the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity, by the words, "*in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*"

The matter may be applied in three ways,—immersion, effusion, and aspersion; *i. e.* the person may be dipped in the water, or the water may be poured on the person, or the person may be sprinkled with the water. Any one of the three is valid, but that by effusion is the mode for the most part prescribed in the ritual of the Western Church. The application of the water is called the *proximate* matter of baptism, or that out of which the Sacrament is immediately made. The same person who says the words must apply the water. He should pour it on the head, if possible, three times, in such a way that it may flow over and wet the skin, and he must have an intention of baptising. The words must accompany the action, and many divines think that if the matter be applied before beginning the form, or the reverse, the baptism is invalid.

Any person can validly administer this Sacrament, whether cleric or layman, Catholic or infidel, man or woman; but the lawful minister is a Bishop or priest, and these alone have a right to baptise in virtue of their orders. A deacon may be commissioned for the purpose. Except in case of necessity, no one else may baptise; and no one

beneath the rank of a deacon may ever do so solemnly. In cases of necessity, the following order should be observed. A woman must not baptise if a man is at hand, nor a layman if a cleric, nor a simple cleric if a priest may be had. When baptism is given by a layman, the person who best understands how to perform the ceremony should generally be preferred in practice.

Among the assistants at baptism are to be reckoned sponsors, or godfathers and godmothers. They are persons who answer on the child's behalf, and undertake, so far as they can, to see that the promises made in the Sacrament are duly carried out, until the child reaches the age of discretion. "Every one," says the Catechism of Trent, "after he has been born, requires a nurse and instructor, by whose assistance and attention he may be brought up and instructed in learning and useful knowledge; so also it is necessary that those, who by the waters of baptism begin to live a spiritual life, should be consigned to the fidelity and prudence of some one from whom they may imbibe the precepts of the Christian religion, and by whom they may be instructed in every manner of Christian piety; and thus gradually grow up in Christ, until, with the Lord's help, they at length arrive at perfect manhood."

The number of sponsors is limited to one godfather or godmother, according to the sex of the child, or at most to both a godfather and godmother.

The person who baptises and the sponsors contract a spiritual affinity with the child and its parents, so that between them no marriage can be lawfully contracted, and if attempted is void.

Baptism is absolutely necessary to salvation for all infants, at least wherever the Gospel has been promulgated. "Except a man has been born of water and of the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven" (St. John iii. 5). Children, therefore, who die unbaptised, cannot enter into the beatific vision. Nevertheless, we need not suppose that they suffer any positive pain; on the contrary, it seems most probable that they enjoy all the bliss of which they are capable. In excluding them

from heaven God does them no wrong, for they never had a right to go there; heaven is a free gift, and in no sense due to us by nature. The case of adults is somewhat different. For them, the actual reception of the Sacrament is not of absolute necessity; for if, without any fault of theirs, they cannot receive it, contrition, which includes the desire of it, will suffice for salvation. For contrition, which springs from the love of God above all things, cannot but justify: "Whosoever loveth, is born of God" (1 St. John iv. 9). "He that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him. . . . If a man love Me, he will keep My words; and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (St. John xiv. 21, 23).

Again, martyrdom, which is the highest act of charity, has always been supposed to supply the place of baptism. We may say, then, that there are three kinds of baptism: the baptism of water, which is the Sacrament; the baptism of the Spirit, which is contrition, including a desire of the Sacrament; the baptism of blood, which is martyrdom.

CHAP. XCII. On the Effects of Baptism.

THE effects of baptism may be enumerated as follows:

1. It incorporates us into Christ, and makes us true members of His body mystical. By original sin we are cut off from God, and have lost all our privileges. We regain them only in Christ. The first thing, therefore, baptism does, is to unite to Christ. "As many of you," says St. Paul, "as have been baptised into Christ, have put on Christ" (Gal. iii. 27).

2. Being engrafted into Christ, we receive, for the sake of His satisfaction and merits, a full and free pardon, together with the fulness of sanctifying grace. The charity of God is poured forth into our hearts by the Holy Ghost, and all sin, original as well as actual, venial as well as mortal, is clean washed away. And not merely the guilt, but also all the punishment for sin is annulled. "For there is no condemnation to those who are truly buried

together with Christ by baptism unto death; who walk not according to the flesh, but who, putting off the old man, and putting on the new man, who is created according to God, are made innocent, immaculate, pure, harmless, and beloved of God" (Rom. viii. 1, vi. 4; Eph. iv. 22, 24; as quoted by Council of Trent, sess. v. 5).

3. Because Christ is a Son by natural right, we, through Him and in Him, are made children by grace. "We are translated," says the Council of Trent, "by the laver of regeneration, from that state in which we were born children of the first Adam, into the state of grace, and of the adoption of the sons of God through the second Adam, Jesus Christ our Saviour" (sess. vi. c. 4). We receive a new principle of life within us, and hence are said to be regenerated, or born again. In the words of Holy Scripture, we receive "power to become the sons of God," and "are born, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (St. John i. 13). "We are born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God" (1 St. Peter i. 23). "The seed of God abideth in us" (St. John iii. 9). "We receive the spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we cry, Abba (Father); for the Spirit Himself giveth testimony to our spirit that we are the sons of God" (Rom. viii. 15, 16).

4. Hence we have a right, by inheritance, to the kingdom of heaven. "If sons," the Apostle goes on, "heirs also; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ" (viii. 17). "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to His great mercy, hath regenerated us into a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto *an inheritance* incorruptible and undefiled, and that cannot fade, reserved in heaven" (1 St. Peter i. 3, 4).

5. We receive, together with the remission of sins and sanctifying grace, an infusion of the three theological virtues, Faith, Hope, and Charity, the moral virtues, and gifts of the Holy Ghost. "He saved us by the laver of regeneration and renovation of the Holy Ghost, whom He hath poured forth upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour" (Titus iii. 5, 6).

6. We receive a title to actual graces, by which we may be enabled to preserve our innocence, learn and profess our faith, and keep the promises we have made to God.

7. Baptism imprints a certain mark or character on the soul, whereby we are set apart from the rest of mankind as Christians. This mark is indelible, can never be effaced, but will remain, either for our greater glory in heaven, or our greater condemnation and shame in hell. It is a sort of resemblance to Christ,—makes us partakers of His priesthood, dedicates us to His service, and empowers us to offer to God acceptable worship. Although baptism removes every thing which has the nature of sin, concupiscence remains; and the regenerate, as well as the unregenerate, have to bear the ills of this life, which are a consequence of original sin. Concupiscence is that rebellious principle in us, that inclines our appetite to pursue its own object independently of the law of God. It is not in itself sin, but is of sin, and inclines to sin; that is, it comes from original sin, and, by incitement, causes actual sin. It is left for us to strive against, and cannot injure those who do not consent, but resist manfully, by the grace of Jesus Christ; yea, he who shall have striven lawfully shall be crowned (*Council of Trent*).

We have to endure the evils of this life, because we, the members, are not to be more honoured than the Head. As Christ our Lord did not lay aside the frailty of human nature till, after having endured the torments and death of His Passion, He rose to the glory of immortal life, who can wonder if the faithful, even after they have received the grace of heavenly justification by baptism, are still clothed with a frail and perishable body,* that, when having undergone any labours for Christ's sake, and having met their death they shall have been again recalled to life, they may at length be worthy to enjoy life eternal with Christ (*Cat. of Coun. of Trent*)? And the Apostle says, "If we suffer with Christ, we shall also reign with Him" (2 Tim. iii. 12). Neither concupiscence, nor the temporal ills of

* "We have this treasure in earthen vessels" (2 Cor. iv. 7).

this life, are to be looked upon in the regenerate as punishments for sin committed before baptism, but rather as means to greater sanctification and glory.

Baptism can never be repeated. In proof of this the Fathers very commonly cite the passage: "It is impossible for those that have been once illuminated, and tasted the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and are fallen away, to be renewed again to penance" (Heb. vi. 4, 6). They say it means not that repentance is impossible, but that those who fall away after baptism can never again receive the full and free pardon of that Sacrament. As a man can only be born once in the order of nature of the flesh, so, in the order of grace, can he only be once born of the Spirit. Baptism is a figure of the death of Christ. "Know ye not that all we who are baptised in Christ Jesus are baptised into His death? that as Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life" (Rom. vi. 3, 4). But "Christ died unto sin once" (vi. 10); as He cannot die again, so neither can we by baptism. Baptism impresses an indelible character, which is of the nature of a consecration; but while a thing remains consecrated, it cannot be reconsecrated. Baptism, again, is chiefly for the sake of original sin; as the evil cannot be incurred more than once, neither can the remedy be repeated. Protestants, and those who have received a baptism out of the Church, are not rebaptised on their admission through any doubt as to the efficacy of lay or heretical baptism,—for, as was said, any one can baptise,—but because there is in such cases, for the most part, reason to fear that all the conditions of true baptism have not been fulfilled; that either the right matter was not used, or that it was not applied sufficiently, or that the form was mutilated, or not used simultaneously with the application of the matter. Such points are not commonly regarded by those out of the Church as matters of great moment, and so are likely to be neglected. The Church does not, however, baptise heretics absolutely, but conditionally, *i. e.* the priest expresses in the form the condition, "If thou art not already baptised, I baptise thee," &c.

CHAP. XCIII. On the Dispositions and Ceremonies of Baptism.

INFANTS are always capable of being validly and efficaciously baptised; for they cannot, by actual sin, hinder the grace of the Sacrament, and the Church supplies the necessary intention. But those who have reached a responsible age must, in order to receive the Sacrament *validly*, of themselves desire to be baptised. God puts before us life and death, to choose one or the other; but He forces neither upon those who are unwilling. To receive the benefits of baptism they must, besides this will, have (1) faith, and (2) a real renouncement of sin, past and future. They must at least have that imperfect kind of sorrow which is called attrition, the nature of which will be explained in treating of Penance. If, however, they fail in having this latter disposition at the time of baptism, they receive the sacrament validly, indeed, but put a bar in the way of its grace; but, by subsequent repentance, the bar is removed, and the Sacrament takes effect.

The Ceremonies used at Baptism. The person to be baptised is brought to the door of the church, but is forbidden to enter. The priest, having ascertained the name, meets him with the question, "What dost thou ask of the Church of God?" To this the person replies, "Faith;" that is, according to the Council of Trent, the faith which worketh by charity, which, as the priest goes on to declare, will alone justify. "If thou desirest to enter into life, keep the commandments, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God,'" &c. The person is breathed on, to signify the breath of the supernatural life, the Holy Ghost, who is about to take the place of the unclean spirit, whom the priest commands to go out. The cross is signed on the forehead and breast, in token that the person is not to be ashamed of the cross of Christ, but is to believe in it with the heart to salvation, and profess it openly.

The exorcisms outside the Church are to deliver from the bondage of Satan. The whole world, since the Fall, is represented as under the dominion of the devil, who is called the Prince of this world (John xiv. 30), and who

says himself that the kingdoms of this world, and the glory of them, have been delivered to him (St. Luke iv. 6). From this servitude the person is freed, in order to be admitted into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. The giving of the salt denotes that the person is to be preserved from the corruption of sin, and taste the savour of heavenly wisdom. Here the person is brought into the church. The ears and nostrils are anointed with spittle, in imitation of the action our Lord performed upon the blind man whom He sent to wash in the pool of Siloe, after having spread clay made of spittle on his eyes (St. John ix. 6, 7); and of that other miracle recorded by St. Mark, when they brought to Jesus one deaf and dumb. We read that our Lord took him from the multitude apart and put His fingers into his ears, and spitting He touched his tongue, and looking up to heaven He groaned and said to him, "Ephpheta!" which is, "be thou opened;" the very words the priest uses in touching the ears and nostrils of the person to be baptised, in order that his ears may be opened to the words of life, and that he may smell the sweet perfumes of the Gospel, and run after Christ to the odour of His ointments (Cant. i. 1, 2).

The person is then required to renounce Satan, and all his works, and all his pomps, after which he is anointed on the breast and between the shoulders with the oil of catechumens, that he may be consecrated to God, that he may think those things which be true and good, and bear bravely the yoke of Christ.

Being thus far consecrated to Christ, he is led up to the font, and there interrogated as to his faith in the articles of the Creed. He is then asked formally if he will be baptised; "for," says the Council of Trent, "through voluntary disobedience man was justly condemned; so the Lord will have none but voluntary soldiers enrolled under his banner, that by a willing obedience to the divine commands we may attain eternal salvation."

After the baptism, the crown of the head is anointed with the chrism, in token that the person, being regenerate and engrafted into Christ, participates in His dignity as King and Priest. The Apostle speaks of Christians as a

holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices; and again, as "a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood" (1 Peter ii. 5-9). "He hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, and we shall reign on the earth" (Apoc. i. 6, v. 10).

The priest then puts a white garment on the person, saying, "Receive this white garment, and see that thou carry it without stain before the judgment-seat of our Lord Jesus Christ, that thou mayest have eternal life." A lighted candle is next put into the hand as a symbol of faith, kindled by charity, to be fed by good works. "Receive this burning light," the priest says, "and keep thy baptism so as to be without blame; keep the commandments of God, that when the Lord shall come to the nuptials thou mayest meet Him in the company of all the saints in the heavenly court, and have eternal life, and live for ever and ever."

CHAP. XCIV. On Confirmation: its Definition, Institution, Matter, Form, Minister, Subject, Obligation, and Dispositions.

CONFIRMATION comes next in order after baptism, because it is considered as the completion of baptism, inasmuch as it confirms and increases that work of grace which baptism began in us.* And so it is said in the order for administering this Sacrament: "Confirm, O God, what Thou hast wrought in us" (Ps. lxxvii. 29).

Confirmation is defined to be "a Sacrament of the New Law, in which the Holy Ghost is given to us, in order to make us strong and perfect Christians and soldiers of Jesus Christ." It was formerly designated by several other names. It was called the seal, or signing, the spiritual seal, the seal of the Lord; because those who are confirmed receive a seal or mark imprinted on their souls. St. Paul refers to it under this name when he writes to the Ephesians: "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby you have been sealed unto the day of redemption" (Eph. iv. 30). It was called the imposition of hands, and is so de-

* Cat. Rom. p. ii. cap. 3, 21.

scribed in the Acts (chap. viii. 7, xix. 6). It was also called the anointing, the anointing of the chrism, the chrism of salvation, or simply the chrism, a name which it still retains amongst the Greeks. The word 'chrism' is derived from a Greek root, which means to anoint, and from which the word Christ, 'the anointed,' is also derived.

But though confirmation is so intimately connected with baptism as to be called its completion, yet it is a distinct Sacrament from it. For the form and matter of the two Sacraments are different; the ordinary minister of the Sacraments is not the same; and, above all, the effects of the two are distinct. By baptism we are born into the supernatural life of grace; by confirmation we are strengthened to become perfect men in it (Ephes. iv. 13). We are enrolled as soldiers in Christ's army in baptism; but by confirmation our spiritual weapons are put into our hands, and we are sent forth into actual warfare. The Holy Ghost is given us in baptism to cleanse us from sin and make us innocent; in confirmation we receive Him to perfect us in virtue.

Its institution. It has been already explained that all the Sacraments were instituted by Christ. The exact time when our Lord appointed the matter and form of confirmation, and promised the peculiar graces that are annexed to it, is not given us in the Gospels. But there is little doubt that it was after the Resurrection, when, as St. Luke tells us, He was instructing His disciples in what belonged to the kingdom of God (Acts i. 3). Accordingly, the Church has laid it down as a matter of faith, that confirmation is not merely a ceremony, or a course of instruction in Christian doctrine, which children have to receive when they come to the age of reason, but "a true and proper Sacrament," instituted by our Lord.*

Matter. The matter of the Sacrament of confirmation is the anointing with the chrism, together with the imposition of hands. For this is necessary to the right administration of the Sacrament. And so when the Apostles

* Conc. Trid. sess. vii.

Peter and John went down to Samaria to confirm the disciples there, the Sacrament is described as given by the imposition of hands (Acts viii. 17). The Bishop first imposes his hands in general over all who are to be confirmed, and next anoints each one in particular with the holy chrism. The chrism is the most sacred of the three holy oils, which are solemnly blessed by the Bishop every Maundy Thursday. It is made of oil of olives mixed with balsam. As in the other Sacraments the matter is figurative of the operation of the Sacrament, so it is here. Oil has certain peculiar qualities,—it penetrates every part of that upon which it is laid; it softens and strengthens; and so fitly represents the similar effects of the Holy Spirit on our souls. The balsam which is mixed with it sends forth a sweet smell, and possesses qualities which enable it to preserve things from corruption; and thus it represents the Christian virtues, which this Sacrament enables men to acquire; for these, like balsam, have a powerful influence in preserving the world from corruption, and shed forth a sweet odour on all within their reach (2 Cor. ii. 15). The chrism is put upon the forehead, and in the form of a cross, signifying that by this anointing the grace is given us to profess our faith boldly and openly, and never to be ashamed of the Cross of Christ.

Form. The form of the Sacrament is the words used by the Bishop whilst anointing the forehead of the person to be confirmed: "I sign thee with the sign of the Cross, I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." After this, the Bishop gives him a little blow on the cheek, saying, "*Pax tecum.*:" "Peace be with you." The meaning of this is, that the person confirmed must now, as a brave soldier, be ready to bear all things, even to ill-treatment and blows, with cheerfulness and courage. Just as our Lord, while He foretold to His Apostles that they should suffer all sorts of persecution for His sake, yet said to them: "Peace be to you; My peace I give to you;" to let them see that these sufferings would not interfere with their inward consolation and peace of mind.

Minister. The ordinary minister of this Sacrament,

Sacrament fasting; but this is not of obligation, and indeed, as it is often conferred in the after part of the day, it does not seem to be expected.

CHAP. XCV. On the Effects and Ceremonies of Confirmation.

EFFECTS. The next point to be explained is the particular effects of this Sacrament. Confirmation, in common with the rest of the Sacraments, increases habitual or sanctifying grace in our souls; but it has, besides this, three particular effects of its own. Its first effect is, that it increases and perfects the grace of baptism, and gives us the plenitude of the Holy Spirit. By baptism we are born again, but this birth leaves us "like new-born infants" (1 Peter ii. 2), with a certain weakness and tenderness of childhood about us; and here confirmation comes in to strengthen us, and render us fit to combat and endure hardness like good soldiers of Jesus Christ (2 Tim. ii. 3). And thus it perfects that work which is begun at our baptism. Hence the Bishop prays in administering this Sacrament, "*Confirma hoc, Deus, quod operatus es in nobis*:" "Strengthen and perfect, O Lord, that work which Thou hast begun in us." And it is from this principal effect that confirmation derives its name; and not, as some pretend, because those who had come to full age were instructed, and then went before the Bishop to make a profession and renewal of their faith. For the Roman Catechism tells us that no proof exists of such a custom. It is not merely a profession of, or instruction in, our faith, but it is a fresh gift of God in our souls. How completely this is the case, is proved by the words of our Lord to His Apostles. He had given them a commission to go forth into the world to preach the Gospel and to plant the Church, and yet so necessary was the fortifying grace of confirmation, that He instructs them not to enter upon their work until they had received it. "Stay you in the city till you be endued with power from on high" (St. Luke xxiv. 49). And the same thing is also proved

by the outward effects which the Sacrament wrought on the Apostles, as soon as they had received it. When our Lord was apprehended, all the disciples forsook Him and fled; and Peter was in such fear, that in his endeavour to escape the suspicion of being one of our Lord's disciples he denied Him. And after the Resurrection they were all together with closed doors, "for fear of the Jews." But as soon as they have received the gift of the Holy Ghost in confirmation, it is quite different. They stand boldly forward before the chief priests and rulers of the people, without being deterred by threats or by punishment. Their courage and boldness is expressly noticed, as causing much astonishment to the rulers and the people (Acts iv. 13). And this is the first and special grace of confirmation, that it gives strength boldly to profess the faith of Christ crucified, the holy sign of which is imprinted on our forehead in confirmation. And it is for this reason that this Sacrament is especially needed in times of persecution, or when we have to encounter any temptation, either against our faith, or the open profession of it. When it is said that in confirmation we receive the plenitude or fulness of the Holy Spirit, it is not meant that nothing more could be given us, but that we receive that measure which suffices to make us perfect Christians. We receive the grace that is then necessary for us, and a title to all those gifts and graces which shall be at any time necessary for us, for the maintenance and profession of our faith. These, of course, will vary in different persons. Our state of life, and other circumstances, may call for more particular exercise of one or another of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost. But we receive them in confirmation in such a way, as to have the benefit of them whenever occasion more especially calls for them. In the early times of the Church those who were confirmed commonly received also some miraculous powers: the gifts of healing, of speaking or interpreting languages, or of prophecy. These are often referred to in the Acts of the Apostles and in the Epistles of St. Paul (see 1 Corinthians, chap. xiv.). But these gifts were given, not for the good of those who received them, but for the benefit of others, for whom

such miraculous exhibitions of God's power were necessary in the infant state of the Church. It is because these gifts are no longer necessary that we do not now receive them, while those graces or gifts which are necessary for our sanctification, God bestows on us now in confirmation, as much as on those who first received this Sacrament.

The second special effect of the Sacrament of confirmation is that, like the Sacrament of baptism, it imprints an indelible mark or character on the soul, typified by the sign of the cross imprinted on the forehead. It is for this reason that this Sacrament can never be repeated, even though it should have been received in mortal sin. Though in this case the grace of the Sacrament is not received, yet it is bestowed as soon as the obstacle is removed, by the soul being restored to the favour of God.

Ceremonies. It remains only to speak now of the ceremonies of confirmation. The Bishop first imposes his hands, or holds them over the heads of those who are to be confirmed, while he prays that God would send down the sevenfold gifts of His Spirit. These are, the spirit of wisdom, of understanding, of counsel, of fortitude, of knowledge, of piety, and of fear of the Lord (Isaiah xi. 2). Each child is next brought up by the godfather or godmother,* who lays his or her hand on the shoulder of the child, while the Bishop anoints him on the forehead with the holy chrism. This he does in the form of a cross, saying the words, "I sign thee with the sign of the cross, I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Lastly, the Bishop gives a little blow on the cheek, to signify that, now having received the grace of the Holy Spirit to strengthen and support him, the person confirmed is to be ready, as "a good soldier of Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. ii. 3), to endure hard treatment, even to blows, in defence of that faith of which he has just made open profession.

* The sponsors for confirmation ought to be different from those who stood for the child in baptism; and if there is only one, should be of the same sex as the person confirmed.

CHAP. XCVI. On the Holy Eucharist: its Definition, Matter, and Form.

THE Holy Eucharist comes third among the sacraments, but by far exceeds them all in dignity. For, while the other sacraments contain grace, this sacrament contains Jesus Christ Himself, the Author of grace. Again, the other sacraments look to this sacrament as their end; baptism, confirmation, and penance more or less directly prepare for its reception; extreme unction removes whatever may impede its action in the soul of the dying; matrimony signifies its special grace of union between Christ and His Church; holy orders confer the power by which it is made. Other sacraments exist only during the act of administration, when the matter and form are being applied; this sacrament exists from the time of the consecration of the matter, and continues so long as the matter remains incorrupt. In other sacraments the substance of the matter is the same after consecration as before, but in this sacrament it is changed. In the other sacraments it is questionable whether they physically or only morally convey grace to the soul; *i.e.* whether they directly confer grace themselves through the power given them by God, or whether they are conditions which infallibly induce God to give grace, in virtue of His institution and promise; but this sacrament certainly conveys grace physically of itself; for the flesh of Christ is of its own nature life-giving, by reason of the hypostatic union.

The Holy Eucharist has different names. It is called the Holy Eucharist, because, at its institution, our Lord gave thanks to His Father, and because it is our chief act of thanksgiving to God; it is called Holy Communion, because by it we are joined together in communion with Christ and one another: "We, being many, are one bread and one body, all that partake of one bread" (1 Cor. x. 17); it is called the most Holy Sacrament, because of its great dignity; the Holy Host, because it contains Jesus Christ, who is the Victim for our salvation; it is called Viaticum, because it supports us in our way, at the end of our journey through this life.

The Holy Eucharist is a sacrifice as well as a sacrament; as a sacrifice it refers primarily to the worship of God, as a sacrament to the sanctification of our souls. It shall be first treated of under the latter aspect, as a sacrament.

It is defined in the Catechism to be "the true body and blood of Jesus Christ, under the appearances of bread and wine."

It consists of two symbols; the body of Christ under the appearance of bread, and the blood of Christ under the appearance of wine, and yet the sacrament is one; for the two symbols have one meaning, viz. the perfect nourishment and refreshment of the soul; just as bread and wine, meat and drink, signify the perfect refreshment of the body. This spiritual nourishment is the grace which the Holy Eucharist as a Sacrament signifies and effects; but, besides this, it has other meanings: with respect to the past, it represents the Passion and death of Christ; it is the body broken and the blood shed set before us: "As often," says St. Paul, "as ye shall eat this bread and drink the chalice, ye shall show the death of the Lord till He come" (1 Cor. xi. 26); with respect to the present, it denotes the Church's unity (1 Cor. x. 17): "The bread," says the catechism of Trent, "made up of many grains, the wine pressed out from many clusters of grapes, declare that we, though many, are most closely bound together by the bond of this divine mystery, and made, as it were, one body;" further, it promises and prefigures the union with God in the beatific vision.

Wheaten bread, and wine made from the grape, are alone the proper matter of the sacrament. The words of consecration, "This is My body," and "This is My blood," or, "This is the chalice of My blood," are the forms. Such is abundantly evident from the account of the institution given by the three Evangelists St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke, as well as by St. Paul. The latter says, "I delivered unto you that which I also received of the Lord; that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks He brake it, and said, 'Take, eat, this is My body which

is broken for you; this do for the commemoration of Me.' And after the same manner also He took the chalice when He had supped, saying, 'This chalice is the New Testament in My blood; this do ye as oft as ye shall drink for the commemoration of Me'" (1 Cor. xi. 23-25). The Church teaches us that our Lord, in pronouncing the words, "This is My body," and "This chalice is the New Testament in My blood," over the bread and wine, changed them respectively into His body and blood; and further, that by the words, "This do for the commemoration of Me," He gave His Apostles and their successors to the end of time, power to perform the same miracle. Thus we have the precise matter and form of the Holy Eucharist determined by our Lord, together with the manner of consecration, which is literally observed by the priest in the Mass. We should notice, also; that the Church prescribes the admixture of a little water with the wine, (1) to represent the water and blood which flowed from the side of our Lord; (2) to represent the effect of the Sacrament,—the union of the faithful with Christ,—for water, in the figurative language of Holy Scripture, signifies people; (3) to signify the divine and human natures of our Lord. The writings of the earliest Fathers and the Liturgies testify to the antiquity of this practice. Although of strict obligation it is not to be regarded as necessary to the validity of the sacrament, or of divine precept.

CHAP. XCVII. The Doctrine of the Church upon the Holy Eucharist.

THE doctrine of the Church on the Blessed Eucharist as a sacrament, may be summed up in three dogmas laid down by the Council of Trent, and proposed to our belief in the Creed of Pope Pius IV.

1. The dogma of the Real Presence. We are required to believe that in this Sacrament there is contained, *after the consecration*, the body and blood of Christ *truly, really, and substantially*, and not only as in a sign or figure, or virtually.

The words "*after consecration*" are directed against the ubiquitists, or those who hold that the body of Christ is every where, as sharing in the omnipresence of the Divinity, and therefore is in the bread *before consecration*;—against the Lutherans, and those who hold that Christ is only present during the act of communion, and not in the elements immediately after consecration (Coun. of Trent, sess. xiii. c. 4). *Truly*, as excluding any mere figurative presence; *really*, i.e. not merely in the soul of the communicant, or as apprehended by faith; *substantially*, in themselves, not merely in effect or power.

2. The dogma of transubstantiation. We are required to believe that the whole substance of the bread is changed into the whole substance of the body of Christ, and the whole substance of the wine into the whole substance of His blood.

The substance of a thing is that which underlies its sensible appearance; hence we do not know its existence by the senses, but by the reason. All we see, feel, taste, smell, hear, belong to the thing, but are not the thing itself; they are called its accidents, because they may or may not be in the thing, without its ceasing to be. Thus bread has a certain form, taste, colour, and yet those qualities do not make up our idea of bread. They might be changed, and yet the bread might remain. Now the miracle of the Holy Eucharist is just the reverse of this. The bread itself is changed, but the appearance of bread still remains; and the same is the case with the wine. This is what we mean when we say that the substance of those things is changed, but the accidents remain.

3. We are required to believe that under each of the species separately, Christ is taken whole and entire, and a true sacrament.

"*Christ whole and entire*;" that is, the Person of Christ, His body, blood, soul, and divinity. Hence, under the species of bread is received not merely the body of Christ, but His blood, soul, and divinity; and under the species of wine, not merely the blood of Christ, but His body, soul, and divinity. It is a part of the doc-

trine of the Incarnation that the hypostatic union is indissoluble, and extends to every part of the Sacred Humanity; and where any part of that Manhood is, there must of necessity be the Person of the Word. Again, Christ's body is a living body: "Christ being risen from the dead, dieth no more" (Romans vi. 9). It cannot be disconnected with the soul or the blood; His glorified human nature does not admit of mutilation or separation of its parts; so that the body, and blood, and soul of Christ must go together. The words of consecration, then, which cause the presence in each kind respectively of the body and blood of Christ, involve His presence as a whole in both kinds separately.

The addition of the clause "*and a true Sacrament*," is very important, as directed against those who maintain that the Catholic Church mutilates the Sacrament by denying the cup to the laity. This discipline is, however, only a consequence of the doctrine just laid down, "that Christ is present whole and entire under either kind." The Holy Eucharist, as was said, in its character as a Sacrament, signifies and imparts spiritual nourishment; but this it does under either kind, for either kind signifies spiritual nourishment, and through either kind that grace is conveyed by union with Christ. The words "except ye eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man, ye have no life in you," form no objection; for the Council of Trent well remarks, "He that said 'except ye eat,' &c., said also 'He that eateth of this bread shall live for ever;' and He who said 'He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life,' said, at the same time, 'The bread which I will give is my flesh for the life of the world.'" Neither can any objection be taken from our Lord's words at the institution, "this do," for it must be conceded that Christ did not command all to do whatever He then did, otherwise laics and women ought to consecrate; nor from the words, "drink ye all of it," for "all" evidently relates to the Apostles. The practice of communicating under one species arose probably from a desire to avoid irreverence, and the risk attending the administration of the chalice to a large assemblage. It was insisted upon so

strongly, because it unmistakably protests against the heresy of those who deny that Christ is wholly present under each species.

CHAP. XCVIII. Proofs of the Doctrine in Holy Scripture.

THE Church points to Holy Scripture in proof of her doctrine on the Holy Eucharist. The main points of reference are, our Lord's discourse in the sixth chapter of St. John, in which He prophetically speaks of the Holy Eucharist as His flesh and blood; the words of institution; and the language of St. Paul to the Corinthians.

1. The sixth chapter of St. John is divided into three parts. From the first to the twenty-sixth verse, we have an account of the miracle in which our Lord fed 5000 persons with five loaves and two fishes, and of His conduct the next day when the crowd gathered round Him. The miracle itself is highly significant of the Holy Eucharist, and cannot fail to connect the discourse founded upon it with that Sacrament.*

At the twenty-sixth verse the discourse founded on the miracle begins. Our Lord introduces it by urging His hearers not to seek the meat which perisheth, but that which endureth unto life everlasting, which He would give them. At the thirty-second verse He goes on to contrast the true bread of His Father, with the bread which Moses gave in the wilderness; and, more explicitly still, at the forty-eighth verse He says: "I am the bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna, and are dead. This is the bread that cometh down from heaven; that if any man eat

* 1. In its incomprehensible character and apparent opposition to the laws of matter; for to speak of feeding five thousand persons with five loaves seems the same sort of contradiction as to speak of Christ's body being present on thousands of altars at once. Was it not the same bread for this man and that in different places?

2. In its being wrought by the same outward acts which our Lord observed in the institution of the Eucharist; compare St. John vi. 11, St. Matt. xiv. 19, with St. Luke xxii. 19, St. Matt. xxvi. 26.

of it he may not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is My flesh for the life of the world. The Jews, therefore, strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us His flesh to eat? Then Jesus said to them, Amen, Amen, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye shall not have life in you. He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up in the last day. For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, abideth in Me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth Me he shall live by Me. This is the bread that came down from heaven; not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead; he that eateth this bread shall live for ever." Now, here our Lord distinctly declares that He will give a bread which shall be His flesh; that they must eat His flesh and drink His blood. At the institution of the Holy Eucharist, He took bread and gave it them to eat, declaring it to be His body. He gave them the chalice to drink, declaring it to be His blood. We recognise, therefore, in that Sacrament the fulfilment of the promise,—in that bread His true flesh,—in that chalice His true blood. We cannot admit that our Lord's words are to be understood merely of faith in Himself or in His Passion; (1) because the connection of ideas is not sufficiently natural to justify such an interpretation. The notion of eating the flesh and drinking the blood of a person, suggests rather the infliction of an injury than receiving a benefit; and the metaphorical meaning of such phrases was actually so determined in the language in which our Lord spoke. To eat the flesh of a person, as an eastern figure of speech, invariably meant to attempt to do him injury, principally by calumny. (2) When the Jews took our Lord's words literally, not only does He not correct them, but so far He confirms their interpretation. He repeats what He had said, and insists upon it in the strongest possible manner, prefacing it by an asseveration hardly short of a

solemn oath: "Amen, Amen, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." But if our Lord meant only to be understood of belief in His death, there was nothing in that doctrine which required such a strong asseveration; for the objection of the Jews was not directed to that doctrine, but to the apparent impossibility of eating His flesh: "How can this man give us His flesh to eat?" When many of His disciples found it hard to believe that His flesh and blood could give life, He appeals to the miracle of the Ascension which they should witness in proof of His power, and to the spirit, *i.e.* His divine nature, as the source of the life-giving power of His flesh. "Doth this scandalise you? what then if you shall see the Son of man ascend up where He was before? It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I have spoken unto you are spirit and life."* (3) Christ frequently distinguishes between His flesh and His blood: "My flesh is meat indeed; and My blood is drink indeed" (v. 56); and between eating His flesh and drinking His blood. But the idea of a figurative manducation affords no ground for such a distinction. In receiving Christ by faith, to eat and to drink are the same; one figure adds nothing to the other.

2. The words of institution are recorded by St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. Paul.

St. Matthew xxvi. 26-28. "And whilst they were at supper Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake, and gave to His disciples and said, 'Take ye and eat. This is My body.' And taking the chalice, He gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, 'Drink ye all of this; for this is My blood of the New Testament which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins.'"

* The interpretation given in the text is that of St. Cyril of Alexandria; there are others maintained by Fathers of the Church and divines. But whichever we adopt, one thing is certain, that the words were not understood, by those who heard them, as resolving our Lord's former expressions into figures of speech, for their difficulty remained, insomuch "that many went back, and walked no more with Him."

St. Mark xiv. 22-24. "And whilst they were eating, Jesus took bread and blessed and brake, and gave to them and said, 'Take ye; This is My body.' And having taken the chalice, giving thanks He gave to them; and they all drank of it. And He said, 'This is My blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many.'"

St. Luke xxii. 19, 20. "And taking the bread He gave thanks and brake, and gave to them, saying, 'This is My body, which is given for you. Do this for a commemoration of Me.' In like manner the chalice also after He had supped, saying, 'This is the chalice of the New Testament in My blood, which shall be shed for you.'"

1 Cor. xi. 23-25. "For I received of the Lord that which I also delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread, and giving thanks, brake, and said, 'Take ye and eat. This is My body which shall be delivered for you. This do, for the commemoration of Me.' In like manner also the chalice, after He had supped, saying, 'This chalice is the New Testament in My blood. This do ye as often as ye shall drink for the commemoration of Me.'"

In order to appreciate the argument, we must bear in mind the circumstances under which our Lord spoke, and the preceding promise of the sixth chapter of St. John. Our Lord and His Apostles had been keeping the feast of the Pasch by eating the lamb, which was a striking type of Christ Himself; our Lord is about to institute something to take the place of that sacrifice, and fulfil it; will He substitute figure for figure, shadow for shadow? do we not expect reality in place of figure, and fulness instead of shadow? This is our Saviour's last act with His disciples before His suffering; He is making His last will and testament; He is God infinite in power and wisdom; "having loved His own, He loved them until the end;" we naturally look for some extraordinary display of love. He is laying down a precept for perpetual observance; surely He will not speak ambiguously. He knows that His words will be taken literally by the greater number of those who shall believe in Him; He knows

that they will cause the gifts to be worshiped as God; and yet He purposely selects them, and neither indicates Himself, nor inspires His Evangelist to indicate that He is speaking figuratively. Bearing all this in mind, we conclude that the literal interpretation is the true one, and that, when our Lord declared that which He gave His disciples to be His body, it was truly His body, and that that which He said was His blood really was His blood.

3. The language of St. Paul adds to our conviction (1 Cor. x. 16): "The chalice of benediction which we bless; is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? and the bread which we break, is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord? For we, being many, are one bread, and one body, all that partake of that one bread." The Apostle is pointing out the guilt of participation in the sacrifices of the heathen, by eating meats which had been offered to idols. He enforces this, by reminding the Corinthians that when they received the chalice of benediction, they were made partakers of the blood of Christ,—that when they received the bread broken, they were brought into communion with the body of Christ. Again (1 Cor. xi. 27-29), St. Paul, having given in detail the account of the institution of the Blessed Eucharist, proceeds to draw practical consequences from it. "Therefore, whosoever shall eat of this bread, or drink of the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." Why? because the Apostle had just said that our Lord, in giving that bread and that chalice, had declared them to be His body; and the New Testament in His blood. He then goes on to inculcate the necessity of proving or examining oneself before partaking of this sacred food, "because he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment (or damnation) to himself, *not discerning the Lord's body*," i.e. not distinguishing it from common food.*

* The Apostle, it is true, speaks of the element after consecration as bread; but he does not call it simply bread, but emphatically "this bread" and "that bread," as in the Canon of the Mass the Church uses the expression, "the Holy Bread of Eternal Life." Nothing can be more natural than to call by this name the sacred

CHAP. XCLX. The Effects of the Holy Eucharist.

1. EFFECTS on the soul. The Holy Eucharist, in common with the other sacraments, confers sanctifying grace, but more abundantly, because it contains the Author of grace Himself: "In this sacred banquet," the Church says, "the soul is filled with grace." Its special effect,—that which distinguishes it from other Sacraments,—is the gift of spiritual nourishment. Our Lord instituted it under the species of bread and wine, to signify that it produces on the soul all the effects that material food produces on the body: "My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed." Material nourishment benefits by becoming one with us; it is not simply conveyed into the stomach, but it spreads all over the body, loses its own nature, enters into and becomes a part of our system. In like manner Jesus Christ, in the Holy Eucharist, unites Himself to us, and becomes one with us: "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood dwelleth in Me, and I in him;" only in this case He is not changed into us, but we are changed into Him.

As material bread when united to us restores, preserves, and increases the body, so the Bread of Life restores, preserves, and augments the soul. It restores the soul, (1) in that it remits its venial sin, and gives back what is daily lost through the heat of concupiscence, as corporal food supplies that which is daily lost by the natural heat of the body; (2) by enkindling the fervour of charity, which is opposed to venial sin. It preserves the soul from future mortal sin; for as the body is preserved from death by natural food, so the soul is preserved from the death of sin by spiritual food: "He that eateth of this bread shall never die." This preservative effect is brought

gift, both from its appearance and from its properties, as well as from its being truly the bread of the soul. Besides, it is not unusual in Scripture to continue to call substances, after they have been changed into others, by the name they bore before the change. Thus, the blind man after he had received his sight is still called the blind man (St. John ix. 17). Aaron's rod and the magicians' rods, after having been changed into serpents, are called rods (Exod. vii. 12).

about (1) by the abundance of grace, which gives a title to a copious supply of actual graces; (2) by producing spiritual delight, which renders the soul less sensible to sensuality; (3) by putting to flight the demons who suggest inordinate desires, &c.; for this sacrament, besides being the very presence of Christ, is the sign of His Passion, which the devils dread; (4) by diminishing concupiscence, hindering or weakening unruly appetites; (5) by impressing on us the mind and spirit of Jesus Christ, His humility, His sweetness, His charity, and all His virtues, and making us participate in His life: "He that eateth Me, he shall live by Me."

And as this divine sacrament not only restores what we have lost, but gives far more, it causes us to grow in grace, as well as preserves us from sin; we are led on thereby from grace to grace, are made more and more perfect, until we reach the end of our journey, the beatific vision; just as we read that the Prophet Élias was supported by that mysterious food the angel gave him forty days and forty nights, until he came to Horeb, the Mount of God. For this reason, and also because it conveys life eternal,—“He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath everlasting life,”—and is highly emblematic of eternal bliss, we call that sacred banquet “the pledge of future glory.” In the Holy Eucharist we see God under the veil of the sacramental species; so in heaven we shall see Him, under His proper form as man, and face to face as God.

Another effect of the Holy Eucharist is actual sweetness and delight. Natural food not only strengthens, repairs, preserves, and increases, but causes a pleasurable feeling; so also does this, our spiritual food; and if such an effect be not experienced at the time of communion, it will follow on a more suitable occasion. It proceeds from the fervour of charity by which a man loves God, not only in necessary matters, but in all things. The presence of Christ excites this fervour, and the fervour produces delight, which proceeds from a sense of the presence of the person beloved. The more the intellect spiritually reflects on the heavenly food, by acts of faith and love, the more

sweetness it will experience; just as earthly food pleases the palate the more it is masticated. This effect may be hindered even with a person in a state of grace; for (1) the palate of the communicant's soul may be vitiated by tasting too much the things of this world; (2) he may fail to make acts of faith or love; (3) the body, if oppressed by sickness or pain, may prove an impediment. And as natural food causes in a healthy person two sorts of pleasure, one to the palate when it is eaten, another to the general system during the process of assimilation, so the Holy Eucharist ought to cause a corresponding twofold delight, one at the time of communion, arising from a realisation of Christ's presence, and afterwards rendering the soul more easily affected by every thing which can cause spiritual joy, and less easily disturbed by sorrowful objects.

It is questionable whether the Holy Eucharist gives the first grace by which mortal sin is remitted; it certainly does not do so in virtue of its institution, for its proper grace, as we have seen, is to nourish; and nourishment presupposes life; yet we may well believe that where there is good faith and a sincere desire of pardon, so great a sacrament will not fail to supply the life that should be in the soul, rather than be received in sin; the communicant must, however, be unconscious of his state, and receive with penitent dispositions.

2. Effects on the body. The Holy Eucharist affects the body (1) indirectly, through the grace with which it fills the soul; that grace, as it were, overflows on the soul's instrument, the body, causing cheerfulness of countenance, modesty of demeanour, dignity in action, composure of gesture, &c. (2) Immediately and directly; St. Paul says, it causes infirmity, imbecility, and death in those who receive unworthily; therefore we may infer that in worthy communicants it causes strength and health for spiritual ends. The Fathers ascribe to this sacrament the glorious resurrection of the body; they refer to the words of Christ, "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day." The beatitude of the body follows from that

of the soul, which itself is caused by sanctifying grace; and as the Holy Eucharist gives the fulness of grace, and enables the soul to persevere till it attains glory, such glory is preëminently ascribed to this sacrament. Moreover, there is a real union between the flesh of Christ and that of the communicant, in virtue of which they become one. As a glorious life is due to the flesh of Christ, so is it due to the flesh of him who by communion is, in a certain way, that very flesh. This effect of the Holy Eucharist on the body is a deep mystery; all we know is that it is most real, and that we are, by the sacrament, made in very truth "members of Christ's body, of His flesh, and of His bones" (Eph. v. 30).

CHAP. C. On the Dispositions necessary for receiving Communion.

THE Blessed Eucharist, as the food of the soul, it has been already said, presupposes spiritual life in the receiver, for food cannot profit the dead. Hence a state of grace, or a prudent judgment of being in such a state, is the first requisite for holy communion; and he who receives while conscious of mortal sin, commits a grievous sacrilege; "he eateth and drinketh judgment to himself; is guilty of the body and blood of the Lord" (1 Cor. xi. 29, 27). Nor should any one communicate without having had the mortal sin remitted by penance, however contrite he may think himself, except where there is urgent reason for receiving and no confessor is at hand, and then there is an obligation of confessing as soon afterwards as possible.

Venial sin does not hinder the primary effect of the Sacrament, sanctifying grace, but it would be unsafe to communicate with an affection to it, and without any wish to rid the soul of it. Our Lord is understood to have taught us this lesson by washing His disciples' feet before He gave them the Holy Eucharist, saying, "He that is clean needeth not, save to wash his feet." They were cleansed from mortal sin, but they needed to have their

feet washed, *i.e.* purified from the soil occasioned by daily contact with earthly things.

Actual devotion is not necessary, but its absence marks irreverence to our Lord, and causes the soul to forfeit the special graces and more abundant blessings of the Sacrament. Two things are required on the part of the body,—fasting, and decency of behaviour.

The fast required is not the ecclesiastical fast, which consists in eating but one meal in the day, but the natural fast, *i.e.* an entire abstinence from every thing digestible, however minute, taken as food. It begins from midnight, because, in the Roman Church, the natural day is reckoned from that time, and the purpose of the fast is, that the body of our Lord shall be the first food he receives in the day. Hence any quantity, however minute, taken as food or drink, breaks the fast; but not so that which is swallowed accidentally by way of respiration or saliva: for instance, we need not stay from communion because we have unintentionally let a drop of water go down the throat in washing out the mouth or walking in the rain; nor need we trouble ourselves if we have imbibed a drop of blood from the gums, or lip, or nose, or inhaled dust; nor are pieces of nail or hairs to be considered food, because such are not digestible. Formerly the fast was continued after communion till the sixth hour, but at present there is no such precept. Reverence, however, commands abstinence till the sacred species are destroyed, *i.e.* for about a quarter of an hour.

There are certain exceptions to this law of fasting.

- (1) Persons who are in probable danger of death can receive the Viaticum without fasting; and they can go on doing so several times a week, so long as the danger lasts.
- (2) If a priest has consecrated and is unable to finish the Mass, and there be no priest at hand who is fasting, another not fasting should complete the sacrifice; and if a priest discovers, after receiving the chalice, that what he consecrated was not wine, he is bound to reconsecrate and consume.
- (3) Should the Blessed Sacrament be in danger of profanation through fire, or falling into the hands of heretics, it may be consumed by a priest or layman without fasting.

As to decency, each one's sense of propriety will remind him that the communicant's dress and person should present nothing unseemly or disorderly, and that the whole demeanour should be modest and respectful.

CHAP. CI. On the Obligation of receiving Communion.

SACRAMENTAL communion is, by divine precept, necessary to salvation, where it may be had, for all adults, and more probably the implicit desire of it is absolutely necessary for both adults and infants. Our Lord says, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." As the natural life of the body cannot be sustained without its proper nourishment, so neither can that of the soul. Unless we are united to Christ we cannot be saved: "For if a man abide not in Me he is cast forth as a branch and is withered" (St. John xv. 6); and the Holy Eucharist was ordained to complete the union between the soul and Christ (St. John vi. 56). It is the consummation of the spiritual life, the end of all the Sacraments, and so it is included in baptism, which is the entrance to the Sacraments, the beginning of the life of grace. Thus are infants, through baptism, made partakers of the Eucharist; and as they believe by the faith of the Church, so they desire the Blessed Sacrament by the intention of the Church, and thereby receive its grace.

Adults are bound to receive communion: (1) in proximate danger of death; (2) on several occasions during life. The Church prescribes once a year, at Easter-time; but those who are exposed to great temptations, and find they cannot persevere by going so seldom, are bound to communicate oftener.

CHAP. CII. On the Minister of the Holy Eucharist.

PRIESTS alone are the ministers of the consecration of the Eucharist, and consecration by any other person is invalid. For to His Apostles alone, and to their successors, Christ said, "This do ye in commemoration of Me." And although

these words apply indirectly to all the faithful, and are a precept commanding them to communicate and join in the sacrifice with the priest, yet, primarily and fully, they apply only to those who were at first addressed. Unless they be so limited, laymen, and even women, would be bound to celebrate, which no one supposes. The Catholic Church has, from the beginning, taught that to the Apostles, and their successors in the priesthood, the power was delivered of consecrating, offering, and administering the body and blood of Christ (*Coun. of Trent*, sess. xxiii. c. 1). It will be seen, further on, that the power of consecrating validly, implies the power of offering sacrifice,—in other words, the priesthood. Any priest, whether heretical, schismatical, excommunicated, or suspended, can consecrate, because the priestly character, or power of orders, cannot be lost. Further, all priests, whether they have the care of souls or not, are bound to celebrate sometimes; for the command of Christ, “This do in commemoration of Me,” obliges all the faithful, the priests directly in themselves, and the laity through the priests. The ordinary and legitimate minister for dispensing the Holy Eucharist is the priest. The Eucharist, as a Sacrament, from its nature, admits of being *validly* given by any one. In the earliest ages the deacon used to administer both kinds, and later on, the chalice only; but according to the present discipline of the Church, the dispensation of the Holy Eucharist is, except in cases of necessity, strictly confined to the priest.

Since it follows, as a necessary consequence, from the doctrine of the Real Presence, that the Blessed Sacrament is to be adored with the highest kind of worship, before leaving this part of the subject it will be fitting to speak of the different practices of devotion, sanctioned and encouraged by the Church, in honour of the Holy Eucharist.

CHAP. CIII. On Devotions connected with the Blessed Sacrament.

THE virtue of religion, spoken of under the first commandment, teaches us the worship of God; and not merely

the internal worship of Him in our minds, but also His external worship, such as it has ever been practised in the Catholic Church. The greater part of this external worship is not left to our own choice. The Church has taken the matter into her own hands and appointed feasts in celebration of the great doctrines and mysteries of religion. She directs Mass to be said, and obliges, on certain days at least, the attendance of the faithful; she lays the obligation of the divine office on all her clergy, and many other things of the same kind. Besides, however, the public Liturgy of the Church, there are certain forms of public prayer, certain pious exercises, instituted or approved by the Church, yet not of obligation as to the time or place in which they are to be performed, but left to the free-will and good aspirations of her children, and which, therefore, commonly go by the name of devotions.

These devotions, however, are a part of the external worship of God, and have therefore the same objects in view; namely, (1) to teach and inculcate some doctrine of the Church, by practically and publicly recognising it; (2) to be a means of manifesting internal devotion; and (3) to be a means of increasing it. For though these external devotions are only meritorious so far as they proceed from internal devotion, yet because we consist of body as well as soul, we are far more easily moved by that which is external and strikes the senses; and hence these external devotions may be made a great means of nourishing and increasing internal devotion.

Devotions are of different kinds, according to the particular object of them. Here we are to consider the devotions connected with the Blessed Sacrament, or which have the Blessed Sacrament for their object.

All devotions depend on some doctrine or another, of which indeed they are only a practical manifestation. And the doctrine on which devotions to the Blessed Sacrament rest is that of the Real Presence. The Council of Trent, when speaking of the worship and veneration which is to be paid to the most Holy Sacrament, says, "There is, therefore, no room for doubt, that all the faithful of Christ, according to the custom ever received in the

Catholic Church, should venerate this most Holy Sacrament with the same supreme worship which belongs to the One True God. Nor, because it was instituted by Christ our Lord to be received as food, ought it on that account to be any the less an object of adoration. For we believe that in it is present that same God Whom when the Eternal Father brought into the world He said, Let all the angels of God adore Him; Whom the wise men falling down adored; and Whom, lastly, the Apostles, as Holy Scripture testifies, adored in Galilee" (*Trid. Conc. sess. xiii. chap. 5*).

When our Lord was about to die for us He instituted the Holy Eucharist, and the last words He spoke before ascending to heaven, as related by St. Matthew, were a promise to be with His disciples all days, even to the consummation of the world; referring in these words, not merely to the coming of the Holy Ghost, who was to abide with them for ever, but to His own real though invisible presence with them in the Holy Sacrament; so that, as in the Temple at Jerusalem and the Tabernacle in the wilderness there was a Divine Presence, which Moses and the priests could ever have recourse to in times of difficulty and trouble, so, still more, God manifest in the flesh might be always within reach of His faithful people, to present themselves before Him with their requests and in their troubles. And, indeed, the different forms of devotion to the most Holy Sacrament are only so many different ways of doing this, either privately by ourselves, or in an act of public homage and adoration.

There are five or six different devotions connected with the Blessed Sacrament. One of these is that, common enough in Catholic countries, but which can seldom be practised in our own, of attending the Blessed Sacrament when carried through the streets to the sick, or joining in the more solemn processions of the Blessed Sacrament which are made on the feast of Corpus Christi or at other times. In this country such processions, publicly made, are illegal, and would besides expose the Holy Sacrament to insult and profanation from the unbelieving multitudes, and so it is generally carried to the sick in

silence and secrecy; and public processions, except under very favourable circumstances, are, out of reverence for the Sacrament, avoided. But in countries where the population is mostly Catholic, there is no devotion to the Blessed Sacrament more natural and simple than that of escorting the priest who bears in his hands the Body of our Lord. Just as our Lord, were He again upon the earth as He was at first, would be attended wherever He went by crowds of the faithful, who out of reverence and love would be anxious to be near Him and to show Him every sign of honour; so, because it is our Lord who is present in the Holy Sacrament, it is but natural for us to show Him the same reverence and love, though we cannot see Him with our outward eyes.

Another form of this devotion is in visits to the Blessed Sacrament. This practice, so familiar, says Cardinal Wiseman, to every one in Catholic countries, "declares at once the simple, hearty, practical belief in the Real Presence; not a vague surmising opinion, not an uncertain hope that the Lord of glory may be there; but a plain conviction, that as surely as a king dwells in his palace, and may there be found by those who are privileged to enter in; or rather, that as certainly as He Himself once dwelt in a stable, making it His first palace upon earth, and was there 'visited' by kings from a distance, and by shepherds from the neighbourhood; that as truly as He abode in the houses of His friends, and was 'visited' by Nicodemus for instruction and by Magdalen for pardon,—so really does He now dwell amongst us in such sort, as that we may similarly come before Him and have recourse to Him in our wants."*

But while "visits" to the Blessed Sacrament have rather the nature of a private devotion, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament is a devotion in which the Blessed Sacrament is adored publicly and solemnly. In a visit we go to our Lord secretly, whereas in Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament He, as it were, sits on His throne, to receive public homage, and give audience to all who come. This is the idea of Exposition. And in accordance with

* Essays, vol. i. p. 481.

this idea, whenever the Blessed Sacrament is publicly exposed, it is with all the accompaniments of outward reverence that the circumstances of the case permit. The Church directs that the altar should be adorned as for a festival, and decked with lights and flowers, and prescribes a certain number of lights as of obligation. The service is to be accompanied with music and incense, and as much solemnity as possible; and the Blessed Sacrament is never to be left without persons "watching," or kneeling in adoration before it. Unbelievers are ready to object that God is not honoured by these outward and material displays; but we may answer, that if it is done with the intention of honouring Him, it does honour Him. And as the wise men offered their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, as Magdalen anointed our Lord with precious ointment, and Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea made all sorts of costly preparations for receiving our Lord's body, so, after these examples, Catholics have in all ages showed their love and devotion to the Blessed Sacrament by offering of the best things this world affords to adorn and honour its presence. It is true that the Blessed Sacrament is not honoured by mere external display, unless it is accompanied with real inward devotion of the heart; but the outward display, so far from excluding inward devotion, has a direct tendency to increase it, and is intended to do so. One of the very objects of Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament is to move men's minds by this display of all possible external homage towards it, to remember that it is our Lord Himself, who is at all times really present, and therefore to honour and adore Him as we are bound to do. The minds of most men are so carnal and unspiritualised, that they are little moved by any thing that does not strike the senses; and in this way external ceremonial is a powerful help to internal devotion. Then, too, the ceremonial is itself very instructive. Every part of it has a meaning: "Around it is disposed, as it were, a firmament of countless lights radiating from it, symbolical of the ever-wakeful host of heaven: the spirits of restless life and unfading brightness that keep watch round the seat of glory above. At the foot of the altar kneel im-

silence and secrecy; and public processions, except under very favourable circumstances, are, out of reverence for the Sacrament, avoided. But in countries where the population is mostly Catholic, there is no devotion to the Blessed Sacrament more natural and simple than that of escorting the priest who bears in his hands the Body of our Lord. Just as our Lord, were He again upon the earth as He was at first, would be attended wherever He went by crowds of the faithful, who out of reverence and love would be anxious to be near Him and to show Him every sign of honour; so, because it is our Lord who is present in the Holy Sacrament, it is but natural for us to show Him the same reverence and love, though we cannot see Him with our outward eyes.

Another form of this devotion is in visits to the Blessed Sacrament. This practice, so familiar, says Cardinal Wiseman, to every one in Catholic countries, "declares at once the simple, hearty, practical belief in the Real Presence; not a vague surmising opinion, not an uncertain hope that the Lord of glory may be there; but a plain conviction, that as surely as a king dwells in his palace, and may there be found by those who are privileged to enter in; or rather, that as certainly as He Himself once dwelt in a stable, making it His first palace upon earth, and was there 'visited' by kings from a distance, and by shepherds from the neighbourhood; that as truly as He abode in the houses of His friends, and was 'visited' by Nicodemus for instruction and by Magdalen for pardon,—so really does He now dwell amongst us in such sort, as that we may similarly come before Him and have recourse to Him in our wants."*

But while "visits" to the Blessed Sacrament have rather the nature of a private devotion, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament is a devotion in which the Blessed Sacrament is adored publicly and solemnly. In a visit we go to our Lord secretly, whereas in Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament He, as it were, sits on His throne, to receive public homage, and give audience to all who come. This is the idea of Exposition. And in accordance with

* Essays, vol. i. p. 481.

this idea, whenever the Blessed Sacrament is publicly exposed, it is with all the accompaniments of outward reverence that the circumstances of the case permit. The Church directs that the altar should be adorned as for a festival, and decked with lights and flowers, and prescribes a certain number of lights as of obligation. The service is to be accompanied with music and incense, and as much solemnity as possible; and the Blessed Sacrament is never to be left without persons "watching," or kneeling in adoration before it. Unbelievers are ready to object that God is not honoured by these outward and material displays; but we may answer, that if it is done with the intention of honouring Him, it does honour Him. And as the wise men offered their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, as Magdalen anointed our Lord with precious ointment, and Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea made all sorts of costly preparations for receiving our Lord's body, so, after these examples, Catholics have in all ages showed their love and devotion to the Blessed Sacrament by offering of the best things this world affords to adorn and honour its presence. It is true that the Blessed Sacrament is not honoured by mere external display, unless it is accompanied with real inward devotion of the heart; but the outward display, so far from excluding inward devotion, has a direct tendency to increase it, and is intended to do so. One of the very objects of Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament is to move men's minds by this display of all possible external homage towards it, to remember that it is our Lord Himself, who is at all times really present, and therefore to honour and adore Him as we are bound to do. The minds of most men are so carnal and unspiritualised, that they are little moved by any thing that does not strike the senses; and in this way external ceremonial is a powerful help to internal devotion. Then, too, the ceremonial is itself very instructive. Every part of it has a meaning: "Around it is disposed, as it were, a firmament of countless lights radiating from it, symbolical of the ever-wakeful host of heaven: the spirits of restless life and unfading brightness that keep watch round the seat of glory above. At the foot of the altar kneel im-

silence and secrecy; and public processions, except under very favourable circumstances, are, out of reverence for the Sacrament, avoided. But in countries where the population is mostly Catholic, there is no devotion to the Blessed Sacrament more natural and simple than that of escorting the priest who bears in his hands the Body of our Lord. Just as our Lord, were He again upon the earth as He was at first, would be attended wherever He went by crowds of the faithful, who out of reverence and love would be anxious to be near Him and to show Him every sign of honour; so, because it is our Lord who is present in the Holy Sacrament, it is but natural for us to show Him the same reverence and love, though we cannot see Him with our outward eyes.

Another form of this devotion is in visits to the Blessed Sacrament. This practice, so familiar, says Cardinal Wiseman, to every one in Catholic countries, "declares at once the simple, hearty, practical belief in the Real Presence; not a vague surmising opinion, not an uncertain hope that the Lord of glory may be there; but a plain conviction, that as surely as a king dwells in his palace, and may there be found by those who are privileged to enter in; or rather, that as certainly as He Himself once dwelt in a stable, making it His first palace upon earth, and was there 'visited' by kings from a distance, and by shepherds from the neighbourhood; that as truly as He abode in the houses of His friends, and was 'visited' by Nicodemus for instruction and by Magdalen for pardon,—so really does He now dwell amongst us in such sort, as that we may similarly come before Him and have recourse to Him in our wants."*

But while "visits" to the Blessed Sacrament have rather the nature of a private devotion, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament is a devotion in which the Blessed Sacrament is adored publicly and solemnly. In a visit we go to our Lord secretly, whereas in Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament He, as it were, sits on His throne, to receive public homage, and give audience to all who come. This is the idea of Exposition. And in accordance with

* Essays, vol. i. p. 481.

this idea, whenever the Blessed Sacrament is publicly exposed, it is with all the accompaniments of outward reverence that the circumstances of the case permit. The Church directs that the altar should be adorned as for a festival, and decked with lights and flowers, and prescribes a certain number of lights as of obligation. The service is to be accompanied with music and incense, and as much solemnity as possible; and the Blessed Sacrament is never to be left without persons "watching," or kneeling in adoration before it. Unbelievers are ready to object that God is not honoured by these outward and material displays; but we may answer, that if it is done with the intention of honouring Him, it does honour Him. And as the wise men offered their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, as Magdalen anointed our Lord with precious ointment, and Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea made all sorts of costly preparations for receiving our Lord's body, so, after these examples, Catholics have in all ages showed their love and devotion to the Blessed Sacrament by offering of the best things this world affords to adorn and honour its presence. It is true that the Blessed Sacrament is not honoured by mere external display, unless it is accompanied with real inward devotion of the heart; but the outward display, so far from excluding inward devotion, has a direct tendency to increase it, and is intended to do so. One of the very objects of Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament is to move men's minds by this display of all possible external homage towards it, to remember that it is our Lord Himself, who is at all times really present, and therefore to honour and adore Him as we are bound to do. The minds of most men are so carnal and unspiritualised, that they are little moved by any thing that does not strike the senses; and in this way external ceremonial is a powerful help to internal devotion. Then, too, the ceremonial is itself very instructive. Every part of it has a meaning: "Around it is disposed, as it were, a firmament of countless lights radiating from it, symbolical of the ever-wakeful host of heaven: the spirits of restless life and unfading brightness that keep watch round the seat of glory above. At the foot of the altar kneel im-

movable, in silent adoration, the priests of the sanctuary, relieving each other day and night, pouring the prayers of the people as fragrant odours before it."* The flowers too are symbolical of those living beings who adorn the altar of God by serving near it in the freshness of youth and beauty, and whose sweetness and fragrance have no higher end than to be sacrificed in God's service, and for His glory. The incense is emblematic of those prayers of the saints, which ascend to heaven as a sweet-smelling odour. While the practice of excluding the external light and covering the images and pictures, is intended "to concentrate and direct attention towards that which is upon the altar, and make it, like the Lamb in heaven, the sun and centre of light and glory to the surrounding sanctuary."†

There are two forms of Exposition, which go by other names. When the Blessed Sacrament is exposed for a very short time, as, for example, after Mass or vespers, or as a short evening service, it is called Benediction; because the benediction or blessing which is always given at the end of every exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, by the priest making the sign of the cross with the Blessed Sacrament over the people, becomes in such short expositions the most important part, as it were, of the service. Benediction is therefore a short and less solemn form of exposition.

The other and most solemn form of exposition is the Quarant' Ore, or, as the word means, the "Forty Hours' " Prayer. It is a devotion that was first instituted at Milan in the year 1534, and was from thence introduced into Rome mainly through the instrumentality of St. Philip Neri. It received the formal sanction of Pope Clement VIII. in 1592. It took its name from the custom of portioning out the whole year amongst the churches of any large town, when there were a sufficient number of them, into spaces of eight-and-forty hours, during which time the Blessed Sacrament was solemnly exposed in each church in succession. The exposition takes place in the Forty Hours' Prayer with more solemnity than at other

* Wiseman's Essays, vol. i. p. 485. † Ibid.

times. It begins and ends with a High Mass and procession, and is conducted under some special regulations, and accompanied with particular prayers. It was instituted as a means of making a more general and solemn supplication to God in times of sickness or national calamity.

CHAP. CIV. On the Holy Eucharist as a Sacrifice.

OUR Lord instituted the Holy Eucharist, not only that He might abide with us and in us, but also to be our sacrifice; and as such it is commonly called the Mass.

By some the word Mass is supposed to be derived from the Hebrew "Missah," which signifies oblation; but more generally the Latin word "Mitto" is taken as its root, because the oblation and prayers are, as it were, sent to God by the ministry of the priest; hence at the end of the sacrifice the priest bids the people go with the words, "Ite missa est:" depart, the oblation has been transmitted to God.

By a sacrifice is meant the offering God the destruction or change of some outward and sensible thing by a proper minister, to acknowledge His supreme excellence and dominion over life and death. Hence sacrifice can be offered to God alone. As an offering sacrifice agrees with other religious actions, such as genuflection, incense, prayer, praise, and contrition (Ps. xlix. 14, 19; Heb. xiii. 15); as a sign, it agrees with the sacraments. Its peculiarity lies in this, that the thing offered signifies, by its destruction, the supreme dominion of God, and protests that the worshiper owes his whole being to Him, and is ready to offer Him his life, in token of which he offers the life, or being; of something else. Not that the destruction of something else, which is not ourselves, is necessary; for the idea of sacrifice is even better fulfilled by one's own life, as in the case of the sacrifice of the cross; but a destruction, or such a change as shall be esteemed destruction, is essential; and so in all ancient sacrifices the thing offered was destroyed: animals were slain, liquids were poured out.

Again, divine institution is necessary for true and efficacious sacrifice; the victim must be chosen of God, and the priest or person who offers. "For no man doth take the honour to himself, but he that is called by God as Aaron was" (Heb. v. 4).

The Scriptural grounds on which the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist as a sacrifice rests, are mainly the following:

1. The prophecy of Malachias. "I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will not receive a gift of your hand; for from the rising of the sun, even to the going down, My name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to My name a clean oblation; for My name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of hosts" (Mal. i. 10, 11). Two things are here announced: the rejection of the Jewish legal sacrifices, and the substitution of a new sacrifice to be offered throughout the whole world. But how is the latter fulfilled if not in the Holy Eucharist, the pure and clean oblation which is offered among all nations from east to west?

2. Again, in Heb. vii. and Ps. cix., Christ is called a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedech. Now Melchisedech is described in Gen. xiv. as offering a sacrifice of bread and wine; therefore Christ is called a priest after the order of Melchisedech, because He too offered a sacrifice under the species of bread and wine. This will be obvious, if we consider that Christ could not be called a priest after the order of Melchisedech for any other reason; not on account of the accordance of Melchisedech's title, King of Salem, with our Lord's title, Prince of Peace; not on account of Melchisedech's being without genealogy, which was typical of Christ's Divinity; nor on account of the other attributes of Melchisedech, enumerated in the 7th chapter of the Hebrews. For all these things show, indeed, that Melchisedech was a type of Christ, and foreshadow the dignity of His priesthood, but do not prove that Christ was a priest after his order; to constitute a similarity of order or rite, there must be a similarity in the thing offered, and not merely a typical relation between

the persons offering. Thus Abel, Isaac, and Aaron were types of Christ, but we cannot say that Christ was a priest after their order; the Jewish sacrifices were types of the sacrifice of the cross, but Christ is not called a priest after the order of Aaron, because there is no likeness in themselves between the legal victims and that offered on the cross. Christ then, and then only, fulfilled the order or rite of Melchisedech, when He instituted the Holy Eucharist; and the Holy Eucharist is a sacrifice, otherwise He would not be a priest after that order.

3. The words at the institution, "This do in commemoration of Me," in the original are full of sacrificial meaning. The word we translate "do" is both in sacred and profane writers quite an ordinary expression for "offer sacrifice." It is so used many times in the Septuagint, the Greek version of the Old Testament, *e. g.* Exod. xxix. 36-39; Lev. vi. 22, ix. 7; Exod. x. 25; and as applied to the paschal sacrifice, Num. ix. 2; Deut. xvi. 1-4; 4 Kings xxiii. 21; 2 Para. xxx. 1, 2. Again, the words, "for a commemoration of Me," point to the victim set before God as a memorial to Him, as well as a reminder to us of the passion and death of His Son. So that the whole injunction, according to the usage of the language in which it was uttered, may well signify, "Offer this sacrifice as a memorial of Me." Our Lord had just been celebrating the paschal sacrifice of the old covenant; now He bids His Apostles offer that far more excellent one of the New Testament. It is as if He had said: "As ye offered that pass-over in remembrance of the miraculous deliverance from Egypt, so offer this in remembrance of Me; that blood was shed for the preservation of the first-born, this for the remission of the sins of the whole world" (St. Chrys. Hom. on St. Matt. xxvi., lxxxii.).

It is objected, from the Epistle to the Hebrews under the new law, there is but one priest and sacrifice, that of the cross: "And the others indeed made many priests, because by reason of death they not suffered to continue; but this, for that he liveth for ever, hath an everlasting priesthood, able also to save for ever them that co

always living to make intercession for us. Who needeth not daily, as the other priests, to offer sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's : for this He did once, in offering Himself" (Heb. vii. 23-27).

But there is nothing here opposed to the Catholic doctrine of the Eucharistic sacrifice. According to that doctrine, Christ is the real offerer in the Mass ; others do but offer in His name and as His vicars, and the Mass is not another sacrifice, distinct in substance from that of the cross, but is the sacrifice of the cross applied. In the passage quoted, all repetition is not denied, but only such a repetition as took place under the old law ; in which, by reason of the imperfect nature of the preceding sacrifices, it was necessary to repeat them again and again, in order to accumulate fresh merit and satisfaction ; but in this way the sacrifice of the Mass is not offered, nor for this end. It is offered by Christ, not now standing, but sitting at the right hand of God, *i. e.* no longer meriting or satisfying, but applying the merits and satisfactions of His sacrifice on the cross, by means of the daily oblation of the unbloody sacrifice. And this repetition, so far from derogating from the sacrifice of the cross, shows in the strongest way its infinite and exhaustless efficacy, since its virtue is not diminished by such repeated applications of it.

Let us next consider in what action of the Mass the sacrifice takes place.

From the nature of the case the act of sacrifice must be (1) one which produces a moral destruction of the victim ; (2) one which is performed in the name of Christ, who is the chief offerer ; (3) one which Christ Himself performed at the time of the institution ; and (4) which represents His death. Hence it is not the oblation which precedes, nor that which follows consecration ; it cannot be the elevation of the species, nor the breaking the Host, nor the admixture of the species, nor their distribution ; but it consists (1) principally in the consecration, and perhaps, also, in the consumption, as its completion. The consecration is performed in the person of Christ, as the forms show : "This is *My* body ;" "This is the chalice of

My blood." (2) Christ Himself instituted it; the words are His very words. (3) It morally destroys the victim, by placing Christ on the altar as it were dead, for, by virtue of the words, the body is separated from the blood under the species of bread, and the blood from the body under the species of wine; and (4) thereby the death of Christ is shown forth, for it is the body broken and the blood shed which are set before us. Again, the consumption completes the sacrifice, because it completes the destruction of the victim, Christ, in His sacramental life; hence the Church so carefully provides that both species be consumed by the celebrant, or by another priest if the celebrant become by any accident incapacitated.

The consecration of both species is essential to the sacrifice, for Christ is a priest after the order of Melchisedech, who offered not bread alone, but bread and wine; and the consecration of one species would not sufficiently show forth the death of Christ.

CHAP. CV. On the relation of the Sacrifice of the Eucharist to other Sacrifices.

THE sacrifice of the Eucharist differs from the sacrifices of the old law (1) on the part of the things offered. The victim therein is not a sheep or an ox, but the body and blood of Christ; no creature, but the Incarnate God. (2) The principal offerer in those sacrifices was the visible human priest who stood ministering; but in the Mass it is Jesus, our invisible High Priest, who sitteth at the right hand of God. (3) The sacrifices of the law were but types and shadows of the true sacrifice (Heb. viii. 5), and had no efficacy in themselves "as to the conscience, to make him perfect that served" (ix. 9, x. 1); "for it is impossible that with the blood of oxen and goats sins should be taken away." But in the sacrifice of the altar, "the blood of Christ, who, by the Holy Ghost, offered Himself unspotted unto God, does cleanse our conscience from dead works to serve the living God," and we are therein sanctified by the oblation of the body of Jesus Christ once.

The sacrifice of the Gospel is the true spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to the Father for its own sake; the sacrifice of the law was only acceptable as a figure of the true. Hence the Eucharistic sacrifice differs essentially from all that had gone before in the old dispensation.

The Eucharistic sacrifice differs also in some respects from the sacrifice of the cross: (1) Christ was offered on the cross mortal and passible; on the altar, immortal and impassible. (2) On the cross Christ offered Himself by His own hands; on the altar, through the ministry of His priests. (3) On the cross He offered Himself with, on the altar without, shedding of blood. (4) On the cross the price of our redemption was paid, and the sacrifice was propitiatory in virtue of its own merits; on the altar that which was purchased is communicated to us, and the sacrifice is propitiatory in virtue of the sacrifice of the cross. These differences are, however, only accidental, for in both cases not only is the victim the same, and the principal offerer, but the immolation of the victim to declare God's supreme dominion is, in the sacrifice of the altar, the very death of Christ upon the cross, mystically presented to God. The two sacrifices, then, are really one and the same sacrifice, offered in different ways.

CHAP. CVI. On the ends of the Sacrifice of the Mass.

THERE are four religious duties we owe God. (1) We have to pay Him honour, and acknowledge His infinite dignity: (2) We have to thank Him for His goodness and mercy towards us: (3) We have to propitiate His majesty, justly offended by our sins: (4) We have to ask Him to supply our needs spiritual and temporal. To discharge these obligations there were, under the old covenant, various sacrifices.

1. The Holocaust, or whole burnt-offering, by its complete destruction, expressed God's supreme dominion and unlimited claim over the offerer.

2. The sin-offerings were to expiate offences against the law.

3. The peace-offerings were made in thanksgiving for blessings received, and perhaps, also, to beg fresh favours.

Those ancient sacrifices had no power or efficacy of themselves; they derived all their virtue from being partial types and representations of the sacrifice of the cross, and consequently also of the altar; hence the latter singly fulfils all the ends for which the former were severally offered.

1. It is a sacrifice of adoration, in which infinite homage is paid to God; for He who is equal to the Father stoops therein to offer that transcendent act of humiliation by which, in becoming obedient to death, even the death of the cross, He acknowledged God's supreme dominion over life and death.

2. It is a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; for in the body and blood of His Son a most adequate return is made to God for all He has done for us.

3. It is a sacrifice of propitiation; Christ therein, by the oblation of His death, mediates between His Father and us, appeases God's anger, and satisfies the rigour of His justice.

4. It is a sacrifice of impetration or prayer; for a price is there offered sufficient to relieve our utmost needs.

Observe, the sacrifice of the Mass does not remit the guilt of sin as the sacraments do. The latter take away sin by immediately causing sanctifying grace in the soul; the former induces God to grant actual grace, by which the sinner is moved to repent and seek the sacraments; and in the same way it obtains increase of grace for the just; but it directly and by itself satisfies for the punishment due to sin, and impetrates other spiritual and temporal blessings. The sacrifice is effectual in virtue of its own action, on account of the dignity of the victim and principal offerer, Christ our Lord, independently of the worthiness of the priest who says the Mass; hence the fruit of the Mass, as a sacrifice, is the same whether it be said devoutly or indevoutly; although the personal holiness and devotion of the priest add efficacy to the accompanying prayers, and call down a further blessing.

A word must be said on the application of the sacrifice.

silence and secrecy; and public processions, except under very favourable circumstances, are, out of reverence for the Sacrament, avoided. But in countries where the population is mostly Catholic, there is no devotion to the Blessed Sacrament more natural and simple than that of escorting the priest who bears in his hands the Body of our Lord. Just as our Lord, were He again upon the earth as He was at first, would be attended wherever He went by crowds of the faithful, who out of reverence and love would be anxious to be near Him and to show Him every sign of honour; so, because it is our Lord who is present in the Holy Sacrament, it is but natural for us to show Him the same reverence and love, though we cannot see Him with our outward eyes.

Another form of this devotion is in visits to the Blessed Sacrament. This practice, so familiar, says Cardinal Wiseman, to every one in Catholic countries, "declares at once the simple, hearty, practical belief in the Real Presence; not a vague surmising opinion, not an uncertain hope that the Lord of glory may be there; but a plain conviction, that as surely as a king dwells in his palace, and may there be found by those who are privileged to enter in; or rather, that as certainly as He Himself once dwelt in a stable, making it His first palace upon earth, and was there 'visited' by kings from a distance, and by shepherds from the neighbourhood; that as truly as He abode in the houses of His friends, and was 'visited' by Nicodemus for instruction and by Magdalen for pardon,—so really does He now dwell amongst us in such sort, as that we may similarly come before Him and have recourse to Him in our wants."*

But while "visits" to the Blessed Sacrament have rather the nature of a private devotion, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament is a devotion in which the Blessed Sacrament is adored publicly and solemnly. In a visit we go to our Lord secretly, whereas in Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament He, as it were, sits on His throne, to receive public homage, and give audience to all who come. This is the idea of Exposition. And in accordance with

* Essays, vol. i. p. 481.

this idea, whenever the Blessed Sacrament is publicly exposed, it is with all the accompaniments of outward reverence that the circumstances of the case permit. The Church directs that the altar should be adorned as for a festival, and decked with lights and flowers, and prescribes a certain number of lights as of obligation. The service is to be accompanied with music and incense, and as much solemnity as possible; and the Blessed Sacrament is never to be left without persons "watching," or kneeling in adoration before it. Unbelievers are ready to object that God is not honoured by these outward and material displays; but we may answer, that if it is done with the intention of honouring Him, it does honour Him. And as the wise men offered their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, as Magdalen anointed our Lord with precious ointment, and Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea made all sorts of costly preparations for receiving our Lord's body, so, after these examples, Catholics have in all ages showed their love and devotion to the Blessed Sacrament by offering of the best things this world affords to adorn and honour its presence. It is true that the Blessed Sacrament is not honoured by mere external display, unless it is accompanied with real inward devotion of the heart; but the outward display, so far from excluding inward devotion, has a direct tendency to increase it, and is intended to do so. One of the very objects of Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament is to move men's minds by this display of all possible external homage towards it, to remember that it is our Lord Himself, who is at all times really present, and therefore to honour and adore Him as we are bound to do. The minds of most men are so carnal and unspiritualised, that they are little moved by any thing that does not strike the senses; and in this way external ceremonial is a powerful help to internal devotion. Then, too, the ceremonial is itself very instructive. Every part of it has a meaning: "Around it is disposed, as it were, a firmament of countless lights radiating from it, symbolical of the ever-wakeful host of heaven: the spirits of restless life and unfading brightness that keep watch round the seat of glory above. At the foot of the altar kneel im-

likewise accomplished, but with a far greater excess of love, in the order of grace. He was not content that we should be born again by the waters of Baptism, but because He knew our frailty would make us fall into fresh sins, He has provided us with the means of recovering His grace and friendship, by the institution of the Sacrament of Penance. For as baptism is necessary to cleanse us from original sin, so likewise is the Sacrament of Penance necessary, to blot out the sins which we commit after baptism. In the same way, therefore, as no one can enter the kingdom of heaven who has not received holy baptism, either in reality or desire, so no one can be saved when he has lost his baptismal innocence, without the actual reception, or, if that be impossible, at least the implicit desire of the Sacrament of Penance, joined with perfect contrition.

Baptism and penance have both been instituted for the remission of sin; still they form two distinct sacraments. Baptism is intended for the remission of original sin and of the actual sins committed before its reception; penance is the divinely appointed remedy for the sins committed after baptism. Baptism, if received worthily, remits the guilt as well as the whole punishment due to sin; penance takes away the guilt and eternal punishment, but generally leaves a debt of temporal punishment, as will be more fully explained in treating of satisfaction. He who died immediately after baptism would go straight to heaven; he who died immediately after the Sacrament of Penance would generally have to go to Purgatory to discharge the debt of temporal punishment. In baptism our sins are more easily forgiven than in the Sacrament of Penance, as in baptism less is required on our side than in penance. Hence penance is sometimes called a laborious baptism.

The word 'penance' is used in three different senses :

1st. As a moral virtue, which leads us to hate and avoid sin, and in this sense penance has at all times been absolutely necessary for the remission of actual sin.

2dly. As the penalty which we endure in punishment of past sin. Thus we speak of persons submitting to the

reverses of this life, or undertaking acts of mortification as a penance for their sins.

3dly. As a sacrament of the new law, by which the sins committed after baptism are forgiven. It is in this sense that it is now to be considered.

It is a true and real sacrament because it possesses all the essentials of a sacrament, viz. 1st, the outward sign, which consists of the acts of the penitent joined with the absolution of the priest; 2dly, the institution of Christ; and 3dly, the power of giving grace, that is, the remission of sin. These two last conditions are clearly implied in the words of our Blessed Saviour, in which He promised His Apostles the power of forgiving sins: "Amen, I say to you, whatsoever ye shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven" (St. Matt. xviii. 18); and also in His still more expressive words which record the fulfilment of this promise: "As the Father has sent Me, I also send you. When He had said this, He breathed on them, and He said to them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained" (St. John xx. 21-23).

The outward sign of the Sacrament of Penance consists of the acts of the penitent, viz. contrition, confession, and satisfaction, together with the absolution of the priest. Contrition, confession, and satisfaction are said by the Council of Trent to be, "as it were, the matter of the Sacrament of Penance." There is this difference between the matter of this sacrament and that of the other sacraments, that in the latter the sensible or outward thing, which we call the matter, is something material in its nature, as, for example, water in Baptism, and chrism in Confirmation; but in the Sacrament of Penance the acts of the penitent take the place of the matter, and hence are called, "as it were, the matter of this sacrament." In another and different sense, the sins of the penitent are also said to be the matter of the sacrament, in the same way as wood or coal is called the matter of a fire; for as the fire burns and consumes the wood or coal, so the acts of

the penitent,—contrition, confession, and satisfaction,—are exercised upon and destroy sin.

In this latter sense all mortal sins committed after baptism, and not already properly confessed and forgiven, constitute the *necessary* matter of the Sacrament of Penance; that is to say, in the ordinary providence of God, they are not forgiven in any other way. Venial sins, or mortal sins already forgiven, are *sufficient* matter for the reception of this sacrament. In other words, it is not necessary to confess venial sins, or to repeat the confession of the mortal sins which have been forgiven; but the confession of these sins, accompanied with proper dispositions, is sufficient to enable us to receive the grace of the sacrament.

The holy Council of Trent teaches that contrition, confession, and satisfaction, are required in the penitent, by the appointment of God, for the integrity of the sacrament and the perfect forgiveness of sins, and that therefore they are called parts of penance. It will be necessary, therefore, to explain each of these separately. Moreover, as we cannot well be sorry for our sins, much less confess them, without having a knowledge of them, it will also be necessary to speak of the examen of conscience.

CHAP. CIX. On the Examination of Conscience.

As the good dispositions which are necessary for the worthy reception of the Sacrament of Penance, can only be obtained by the help of Divine grace, we should earnestly beg of God His assistance to enable us to make a good confession. When, therefore, we examine our conscience, we should pray for light and grace from God to know the sins which we have committed, their number and their grievousness. Then we should go over the ten commandments, the precepts of the Church, the seven capital sins, and the special duties and obligations of our state of life, and call to mind the particulars in which we have sinned. For this purpose we may either use the form of examination found in our prayer-books, or we may go through

the circumstances of each day, considering the occupations in which we have been engaged, the places we have frequented, the persons we have seen, the duties we have had to perform; and we should ask ourselves whether in any of these circumstances we have wilfully done any thing which our conscience condemned, or omitted any thing which it commanded.

In making this examination, St. Alphonsus warns us to avoid too much anxiety on the one side, and carelessness on the other. The general rule laid down is to use that amount of diligence in discovering our sins which a person of ordinary prudence generally employs in any matter of importance. It is difficult to define how much time should be spent in this part of our preparation, as so much depends upon circumstances. Thus a longer time would be required where the confession extended over a period of several years, than if it embraced only a week or a month. A longer preparation would be necessary where the penitent has been mixed up with a great variety of transactions and employments, than where he has led a quiet life with few duties and obligations. More care is required where he has frequently fallen into grievous sins, than where he has seldom or ever transgressed in a matter of importance. When, however, we have made a diligent examination, according to the circumstances of the case, we should rest satisfied and proceed to the other parts of our preparation. For even if it should happen that after having taken reasonable care to discover our sins, some grievous transgression has escaped our memory, that sin would be pardoned equally with those which were actually confessed, and all that would be required of us would be to mention it afterwards, should it recur to our memory. We should also bear in mind that though it is necessary diligently to examine our conscience, this is by no means the only, nor the most important part of our preparation for confession. Many act as if they thought the examination of conscience were the only thing which was required of them, but there cannot be a greater mistake, as we shall presently see.

CHAP. CX. On Contrition : its Necessity and Nature.

AFTER we have carefully examined our conscience, and discovered the sins of which we are guilty, we should endeavour to be truly sorry for them. This sorrow for sin is the most important part of our preparation for the Sacrament of Penance; for all the rest is sure to be well performed if our sorrow be such as it ought to be. But without true sorrow every thing else, however well it has been performed, will not obtain for us the remission of our sins. We may have examined our conscience with the utmost diligence,—we may have made a most exact declaration of every part of our guilt in its minutest details,—we may have received absolution and performed our penance with all the fervour of a saint,—but if we have had no proper contrition our confession is null and void. Contrition, being an essential part of the Sacrament of Penance, is in all cases as necessary for its valid reception as water is for baptism. If a person through mistake, and without any fault on his part, were to use wine instead of water in baptising a child, there would be no sacrament, and consequently the original sin in which that child was born would not be remitted. In the same way, if we approach the Sacrament of Penance, and perform every other part well, but have not contrition, the absolution is null. Still more, however small the sins of which we have been guilty, if we knowingly and wilfully make our confession, and receive absolution without having true contrition for at least one of them, we commit a grievous sin and render our confession sacrilegious. Observe, it is said, knowingly and wilfully; for if we came to confession really believing in our heart that we had true sorrow for our sins while in truth we had none, our confession would be still without effect, that is, we should not receive the grace of God, nor the remission of our sins; but as we had a sincere desire and intention of doing all that was required of us, our confession would not be sacrilegious, nor should we commit a fresh sin, nor, in fine, should we be obliged to repeat the confession, unless we afterwards discovered there had been no contrition. These sins would afterwards

be forgiven, either by making an act of perfect contrition, or by the reception of a sacrament of the living, or at least by the worthy reception of the Sacrament of Penance, in the same way as sins which we have entirely forgotten are forgiven.

Not only is contrition a necessary disposition for the reception of the Sacrament of Penance, but in certain exceptional cases it is the only thing necessary. If, for instance, the penitent be speechless, or if no priest can be had who understands his language, contrition, at least if elicited with a view to receiving the sacrament, will suffice to enable him to receive absolution and to obtain the remission of his sins. Nay, so great is its efficacy, that perfect contrition, as we shall see later, washes away the guilt of sin, even before we have actually made our confession or received absolution.

Let us next consider the nature of contrition.

Contrition, in the words of the Catechism, is a hearty sorrow for our sins, by which we have offended so good a God, with a firm purpose of amendment. There are two kinds of contrition, perfect and imperfect, or as they are commonly called, Contrition and Attrition. Contrition is a sorrow for sin which proceeds from the love of God above all things; attrition is also a sorrow for sin which springs from a good and supernatural motive, though less perfect than charity. Thus, a person would have attrition who was sorry for having offended God, because he had thereby lost his title to heaven and deserved to be condemned to hell. Contrition looks at God alone, whom we grieve for having offended; attrition looks at self, and makes us sorry that we have offended God because of the loss which we have thereby brought upon ourselves. There are many points of resemblance between perfect and imperfect contrition, and others in which they are contrasted. It will be best, therefore, first, to explain what they possess in common, and, secondly, in what they differ.

The following qualities belong equally to contrition and attrition:

1. Sorrow for sin must be inward, that is, it must

come from the heart: "Be converted to Me with all your heart, in fasting and in weeping, and in mourning, and rend your hearts and not your garments, and turn to the Lord your God" (Joel ii. 12, 13). Tears and sighs and other outward marks of grief are profitable so far as they are the expression of our inward feeling. True repentance and sorrow of heart may, however, exist without any of these outward manifestations; while the most passionate expressions of grief which proceed not from the heart, are but a cloak for hypocrisy.

2. Our sorrow must be supernatural, that is, it is not enough to be sorry for our sins from any human or natural motive. For example, it is not enough to be sorry on account of the loss of our goods or our good name, or for any purely temporal disadvantage which sin has occasioned us. True contrition must be grounded on some motive known to us by faith, and can only be obtained by the help of God's grace. Hence, as prayer is the ordinary means of obtaining grace, we should pray earnestly for the gift of contrition.

3. Our sorrow for sin must be universal, that is, it must extend to at least all the mortal sins of which we are guilty. If there be a single mortal sin on our conscience for which we have no contrition, we cannot obtain the forgiveness of any of our sins; for no sin can be forgiven without the infusion of sanctifying grace into the soul. Now as we cannot be at the same time both friends and enemies of God, we cannot receive sanctifying grace so long as there is a single grievous sin on our conscience, of which we do not sincerely repent. Indeed, to speak more correctly, we cannot be said to have true sorrow for any of our sins, so long as we wilfully exclude from our contrition a single grievous sin. With regard to venial sins, those alone are forgiven for which we are truly sorry; but as we are not obliged to confess venial sins, we are not strictly obliged to be sorry for them, unless they constitute the only matter of our confession, in which case it is necessary to be sorry for at least one of them, otherwise the sacrament would be null and void for want of sufficient matter.

It may be as well to observe that, as contrition is in every case an essential condition for the valid reception of the sacrament, those who have been guilty of only small venial sins, since the time they last received absolution, do well to include in their confession some more grievous sin of their past life, in order to make quite sure that there is one sin in their confession for which they are truly sorry. To make the advantage of this practice quite clear, let us suppose the case of two persons who have committed the same venial sins since their last confession, and both prepare with exactly the same dispositions, so far as regards these venial sins, to approach once more the Sacrament of Penance. As the faults which they have committed are small, we will suppose that, though they really believe themselves sorry for them, they have not a sufficient amount of contrition to make the sacrament valid. One of them, however, takes the precaution to add some sin of his past life for which he is truly sorry, and thus supplies the deficiency, and receives all the graces and benefits of the sacrament; while the other, who neglects this precaution, presents himself for absolution without possessing one of the essential conditions, and so makes his confession nothing worth.

4. Our sorrow for sin should be supreme or sovereign. We should hate and detest sin more than any other evil. We ought to avoid evil with more or less care according to its greatness. Thus, for example, if we grieve for a small loss, we should naturally grieve more for a greater. Now as faith teaches us that sin is a greater evil than any earthly calamity, we ought to be prepared to hate and detest sin more than any other evil. It is not enough for us to be convinced in our mind that sin deserves to be hated and detested above every thing else, but our will should actually so hate and detest it. Still it is not necessary that we should feel more keenly the evil of sin than we feel some temporal loss, for instance, the death of a dear friend. It is not in our power to command our feelings, and true contrition, as already explained, may exist without any such outward manifestations of grief, or any such sensible feeling of sorrow, as persons

usually experience at the death of those who have been near and dear to them. It suffices for us to regard sin as the greatest of all calamities, and to be ready to forego any gain, or to suffer any loss to avoid its commission.

CHAP. CXI. Of a Purpose of Amendment.

CONTRITION and attrition must both be accompanied with a firm purpose of amendment. This purpose of amendment is defined by the Catechism as "a resolution, by the grace of God, to avoid not only sin but also the occasions of it." It forms a necessary part of contrition, because we cannot really be sorry for past sin without virtually resolving to guard against it for the time to come. Like contrition, our purpose of amendment should possess certain qualities. It should be,—

1. Firm; that is, that it should be a real determination of the will to avoid sin for the time to come. It is not enough to form some empty desire or barren wish to do better, but we must have a solid and practical resolution.

2. Supernatural. The explanation of this quality which has been just given with reference to contrition, will also hold good in reference to the purpose of amendment.

3. Universal. Our purpose of amendment must virtually extend to all mortal sins whatever, and in case our confession consists of venial sins only, it must apply to at least one of them. In speaking of this quality in reference to contrition, it was stated that it was necessary to be sorry for all the mortal sins of which we are guilty. We are required, therefore, to have contrition for our actual sins, but not for the sins of others, or for the sins which we may possibly commit. But with regard to the purpose of amendment the case is different: we must not only resolve to avoid a relapse into the sins which we have already committed, but we must resolve to avoid implicitly all possible mortal sins. For in the same way as he who has committed two mortal sins cannot be truly sorry for one, while he cherishes an attachment to the other, so

neither can he who excepts any possible mortal sin from his good resolution, be really sorry for the sins which he has actually committed.

4. *Efficacious.* Our purpose of amendment should lead us to adopt the requisite means to secure an amendment of life. He who really resolves to gain any particular object inquires what means will lead him to it, and puts them in practice. If, for instance, he wishes to become learned, he studies diligently. So he who resolves to avoid sin will use the remedies which he knows are requisite to obtain his purpose. An unwillingness to comply with the conditions which reason and experience point out as necessary to insure an amendment of life, would be a clear test that the contrition and purpose of amendment were defective. We may not always have it in our power to fix on any definite means, whose adoption or rejection would prove the sincerity of our contrition and purpose of amendment; but it will be well to mention here the more obvious cases in which such a test may be easily applied.

1. In order to obtain forgiveness of God we are required to forgive those who have offended us: "If you will forgive men their offences," says our Blessed Saviour, "your Heavenly Father will forgive you also your offences. But if you will not forgive men, neither will your Father forgive you your offences" (St. Matthew vi. 14, 15). If, therefore, persons will not pardon the injuries which they have received, they are not in proper dispositions for the Sacrament of Penance, because they do not bring with them one of the necessary conditions required by our Lord.

2. Those who have injured another either in his honour, his character, or his possessions, are bound, as far as they are able, to make satisfaction. If, therefore, they refuse to beg pardon when they have shown disrespect to a superior, or to restore the reputation which they have destroyed by calumny or detraction, or to give back ill-gotten goods, they clearly show they have not that contrition and purpose of amendment which is required of them.

3. Those who are truly sorry for past sin, and firmly resolved to avoid sin for the time to come, will take particular

pains to correct their bad habits and to avoid the occasions of sin. By a habit we mean a facility of doing any thing, acquired by repeated acts. Thus he who has repeatedly fallen into the same sin will commit it almost without thinking of it, and unless he be particularly on his guard, and apply himself diligently to use the prescribed remedies, he will continue to relapse over and over again into that sin. The readiness, therefore, with which he adopts the necessary precautions against a relapse, will show how far his purpose of amendment is efficacious.

What has been said with regard to bad habits will apply still more strongly to occasions of sin, because here, the evil being external to ourselves, it is much more directly within our power to guard against it. By an occasion of sin is meant any external circumstance in which we are led to commit sin. Occasions of sin may be proximate or remote. A proximate occasion is one in which a person generally commits the sin; a remote occasion is one in which he sometimes, though, comparatively speaking, rarely commits the sin. Thus to frequent bad company is an occasion of sin to most persons. If by frequenting the company of certain persons we are generally led to commit sin, their company is a proximate occasion of sin to us; if, however, we are rarely led to commit sin by their society, it is a remote occasion of sin. It is obvious that the very same thing may be an occasion of sin to one person which is perfectly harmless to another; but the real practical point for each one to consider, is what occasions are dangerous to him. We are strictly bound to avoid whatever is to us a proximate occasion of grievous sin. But what is one to do who cannot forsake the sinful occasion without incurring a very heavy loss; suppose, for example, he would be obliged to give up the situation on which the support of himself and family depended. In such a case he would be bound to have recourse to prayer, the remembrance of the four last things, the frequent renewal of his good resolutions in the presence of God, and to use such other remedies as a prudent confessor would suggest, in order to take away the proximate danger of relapsing into grievous sin. If he refuse to adopt the pre-

servatives which are prescribed, or if, notwithstanding their use, he still becomes no better, he cannot be admitted to the Sacraments. All occasions of mortal sin in which the danger of falling does not become remote, by the use of the proper precautions, must be abandoned, cost what it may: "If thy hand or thy foot scandalise thee, cut it off and cast it from thee. It is better for thee to go into life maimed or lame, than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thy eye scandalise thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee. It is better for thee having one eye to enter into life, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire" (St. Matt. xviii. 8, 9).

In the case of persons who have unjustly injured their neighbour, or who have contracted bad habits, or who are living in occasions of sin, St. Alphonsus recommends confessors to defer absolution, unless there is some strong reason to the contrary, until their penitents have given a practical proof of the sincerity of their purpose of amendment, by making restitution, by endeavouring to conquer their bad habits, and by removing the occasions which have hitherto led them into sin.

With regard to remote occasions of sin, it is a matter of counsel to avoid them as far as we are able; but we are under no strict command to shun them as such, because it is impossible to avoid all remote occasions of sin so long as we live upon earth, and also because the danger of committing sin under such circumstances, may be safely guarded against in other ways.

CHAP. CXII. Contrition and Attrition contrasted.

HAVING explained the various particulars which are common to contrition and attrition, a very few words will suffice to show the chief points in which they differ. Contrition and attrition differ from each other,—

1. In their motive. Contrition is based upon charity alone, or the love of God above all things; attrition is grounded on a supernatural, though less perfect, motive; for example, the malice and deformity of sin in its own

nature, the eternal punishment which it deserves, the loss of heaven which it entails. A child who has incurred the displeasure of a good parent may be sorry for his fault, without considering the loss or punishment which he has brought upon himself, but simply from the love which he bears his father; or he may be sorry because he feels he has done something dishonourable, or something for which he will have to suffer. In the former case his sorrow corresponds to contrition, in the latter to attrition. To avoid the possibility of a mistake, we may say that it is not sufficient for attrition to be afraid of losing heaven or of being condemned to hell, but it must make us repent of past sin and amend our life for the future, as the indispensable means of gaining heaven or escaping hell. Acts of contrition and attrition may be respectively expressed in the following or any similar form of words:

An Act of Contrition. O my God, because Thou art infinitely good and most worthy of all love, I grieve from my heart for having sinned against Thee, and I purpose, by Thy grace, never more to offend Thee for the time to come.

An Act of Attrition. O my God, because by my sins I have deserved hell and lost my claim to heaven, I am truly sorry that I have offended Thee, and I firmly resolve, by Thy grace, to avoid sin for the time to come.

2. In their effects. Contrition, joined to the desire of the Sacrament of Penance, remits the guilt of sin before we have actually made our confession or received absolution; attrition disposes us to receive forgiveness when joined with the actual reception of the sacrament. Contrition, being a much higher and more perfect disposition than attrition, prepares us for the reception of a more abundant grace, and for the remission of a larger portion of the temporal punishment due to sin.

CHAP. CXIII. On the Means of obtaining Contrition.

CONTRITION being absolutely necessary for the remission of sin, it is of the utmost importance for us to understand

well how to make acts of contrition. The Catechism points out two means by which we may obtain it:

1. We must earnestly beg it of God; and

2. We must make use of such considerations as move us to it.

1. The very nature of contrition, as already explained, shows the necessity of prayer for its attainment; for as the sorrow which is required in the Sacrament of Penance is supernatural, it cannot be obtained without the assistance of grace. Now grace is a free gift of God, and according to His ordinary providence is granted in answer to prayer. Whenever, therefore, we require the grace of contrition, we should have recourse to the Giver of all good gifts by humble and earnest prayer. It is not enough for us to repeat with our lips any set form of prayer, nor to recite the words which express contrition, no matter however perfect; but we must humbly and earnestly beg of God to help us to make the necessary acts. When, however, we have done our best, we may confidently leave ourselves in the hands of the Divine Providence; for He who so lovingly invites sinners to return to Him, will not reject the prayer of those who seek the means of forgiveness and reconciliation with Him. He never commands what is impossible; if, therefore, He commands us to have contrition as often as we approach the tribunal of penance, He will most certainly bestow upon us all that is necessary on His part, if we on our side humbly seek and desire it.

2. The motives enumerated by the Council of Trent as the grounds for contrition are, the malice and deformity of sin, the punishments which it deserves, the loss which it inflicts on us, and the outrage which it offers to the infinite goodness of God, whom we should love above all things. We should consider these motives in the light of faith, and view sin as it appears in the sight of God. He who knows all things, and judges of all things infinitely more correctly than we can possibly do, regards the least venial sin as something far worse in itself, and far more to be avoided, than the greatest calamity which can befall us. He could humble Himself so as to take upon Himself

our miseries; He could allow Himself to suffer every kind of insult and ignominy; He could submit to be crucified between two thieves; but so great is the horror with which He views even the smallest sin, that He could not allow the least stain of guilt to sully the sacred humanity which He assumed for our sakes. Now if God so hates and detests sin, it must surely be something supremely hateful and detestable. He cannot be deceived in the judgment which He forms of its malice. It is therefore most reasonable that we should look upon sin as God does, and hate and detest it as He does.

Again, after considering sin in its own nature, we should pass on to consider it in reference to ourselves, and we shall easily see that it is the most terrible evil that can befall us. There are two ways by which we measure the greatness of any calamity which threatens us, viz. the greatness of the sufferings which it will inflict upon us, and the greatness of the loss which it will cause us. Now whether we consider the eternity of torments of the worst kind which sin deserves, or whether we reflect on the unspeakable and everlasting joys of heaven, of which it deprives us, no other evil can be compared with mortal sin. Hence there is no other evil which we should hate and detest so much as mortal sin. But as the best motive of sorrow for our sins is "the love of God, who is infinitely good in Himself, and infinitely good to us," the most perfect contrition does not look at sin in its opposition to our own good, but in its opposition to the infinite goodness of God. If we love God above all things, as He deserves to be loved, we shall necessarily hate sin, as directly opposed to His sovereign goodness.

The importance of this subject will justify a full explanation of the best means of securing contrition as often as we go to confession. If we exercise ourselves daily in making acts of contrition, we can hardly fail to acquire a facility in eliciting these acts whenever we wish. It is a common saying, that practice makes perfect, and there is scarcely any accomplishment which we cannot master by constant and persevering application. If we practise the same thing over and over again, we shall at

last succeed in doing it well. If we daily strive to make a real act of sorrow and purpose of amendment for the faults which we daily commit,—if we begin to cultivate a spirit of compunction and abiding contrition for our sins,—we may perhaps succeed imperfectly at first; but if we persevere, we shall acquire a habit and facility in making acts of contrition almost without any effort. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of such a habit as this. It will provide us with an antidote against the faults which we constantly commit; it will preserve us in the grace of God; it will dispose us to receive unspeakable treasures of grace as often as we approach the Sacraments; and when death overtakes us, though no priest may be near to pronounce the words of absolution, and to administer to us the consolations of religion, it will obtain for us the forgiveness of our sins, and, by the mercy of God, insure our eternal salvation.

Such, then, is the nature of the contrition which is required in the Sacrament of Penance. Without such a sorrow for sin, confession and absolution are of no avail. We sometimes hear confession spoken of as though it tended to encourage sin, by promising forgiveness on such easy terms. But surely this objection can only be made by persons who are ignorant of the teaching of the Church on this subject. If we believed that confession alone, without repentance or amendment of life, was the only condition on which the forgiveness of sins was held out to us, there might indeed be some truth in the objection; but such a doctrine has always been condemned by the Catholic Church. If any Catholic has been wicked enough to commit sin, because he promised himself that he would afterwards go to confession and obtain forgiveness, he must either have been ignorant of his religion, or he must have been in the most inconceivable state of mind. He must virtually have said to himself, “I will do this because I shall repent of it and be sorry for it as long as I live. I will do it because I shall acknowledge I have acted in opposition to my best interests, and inflicted upon myself an injury which I can never sufficiently deplore. I will do it because I shall afterwards promise never again, for any consideration in the world, to do the same thing.

CHAP. CXIV. On Confession: its Necessity and Qualities.

CONFESSION is to accuse ourselves of our sins to a priest, with a view to obtain their forgiveness. Besides being properly ordained, the priest to whom confession is made should be approved for hearing confessions, by the Bishop or Vicar-General of the diocese in which he exercises his ministry. Without this approbation his ministration is not only unlawful but invalid, except in danger of death, when any priest may absolve.

That the confession of sins is a necessary part of the institution of Christ may be easily shown,—

1. From our Lord's words to His Apostles: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained" (St. John xx. 22, 23). In these words our blessed Lord made His Apostles and their successors judges in matters of conscience, with power to acquit or condemn, to forgive or retain sins. But we cannot suppose that this power was to be exercised without any regard to the merits of the case. A judge cannot pass sentence without a competent knowledge of the cause which he is called upon to decide. Now in the case of sin this knowledge can only be had by the free confession of the penitent. In making the Apostles judges in the court of conscience, Jesus Christ has imposed upon sinners the obligation of manifesting their guilt. All, therefore, who would profit by the institution of our Lord and obtain pardon, must humbly acknowledge their sins to those who have received power to forgive them.

2. From the very nature of the obligation of confession. Unless we admit that confession was instituted by our Lord, and practised from the days of the Apostles, we must allow that it is a human institution of later origin, which has been introduced and enforced as an indispensable ordinance of Christ without any one protesting against it, or being able to point out the time or circumstances of its introduction. Such a supposition touching an institution of so practical a kind, and so opposed to human pride, is totally impossible.

But it is necessary to explain what are the qualities of a good confession.

Various qualities are spoken of by spiritual writers as belonging to a good confession. The most important of them are included in the four following ones. Confession should be,—

1. Humble. He who has a proper sense of the evil of sin, and is truly sorry for the guilt which he has incurred, will manifest his sins with true humility of heart. He will present himself before the tribunal of Christ in the same dispositions with which the penitent publican entered the Temple of God, striking his breast and saying, "O God, be merciful to me a sinner." He will take the position of a culprit, and confess his sins with humility and shame, and not seek to make confession a cloak for praising himself, like the proud Pharisee, whose prayer consisted of a catalogue of his pretended virtues.

2. Short. Confession should be an accusation of our guilt, and should not be mixed up with narrations which no way help to manifest the state of our conscience. For, as in the other sacraments, that is the fittest and most proper matter, which is the most free from the admixture of any other substance; so that confession is the best which consists simply of a candid acknowledgment of our guilt. St. Francis of Sales warns us against using such expressions as, "I accuse myself of not loving God as much as I ought; of not loving my neighbour as myself; of not saying my prayers and preparing for the sacraments in the best dispositions I was able." Such general declarations are, to say the least, useless. Unless the penitent, after a diligent examination of conscience, can call to mind some particular in which he has been wanting in the love of God, or of his neighbour, he should pass the subject over in silence. But this is a pardonable fault compared with the practice of those who make confession a history of their troubles, or, what is worse, whose confession is a manifestation of others' sins rather than of their own. The name of a third person should not be mentioned in confession, nor should the fault of another be made known, unless it is quite necessary for the manifestation of one's

own guilt. So important is it to keep the confession of our sins separate from all other subjects, that even when persons require counsel, unless it be necessary for their present confession, they do well to defer it till after they have received absolution.

3. Sincere. Confession should be made with truth and simplicity. We should endeavour to manifest as far as we are able the exact state of our conscience. We should therefore speak of what is certain as certain, and of what is doubtful as doubtful. We should avoid all expressions likely to mislead our confessor, or which tend either to increase or to lessen our actual guilt. Some persons are fond of excusing themselves, and of attributing all the blame to others. If they have been angry, they say they were provoked; if they have neglected any of their duties, they say they could not help it. Others, on the contrary, through a desire to be on the safe side, exaggerate the number of their sins, or omit the mention of circumstances which either take away or materially lessen their guilt. Thus they will perhaps accuse themselves of missing Mass on a Sunday without making known that they were sick, or so far away that they were not able to be present. We should endeavour to state the case exactly as it is in the sight of God, without seeking to make ourselves either better or worse than we really are. Again, the sincerity of our confession will teach us to approach this sacrament with the sole view of obtaining the pardon of our sins. Thus they are wanting in sincerity who use confession as a means of recounting their distress, in order to obtain alms.

4. Full or entire. While avoiding the mention of every thing which does not help to manifest the state of our conscience, we are strictly bound to make a full and candid acknowledgment of our guilt, so far as we have been able to remember it after a diligent examination of our conscience. He who has once grievously offended Almighty God after baptism, though it were only in thought, has no other remedy but to confess his sin, where confession is possible. He may be sorry for it; he may avoid it for the future; he may do penance for it all his

life; but if he will not confess it, he cannot obtain pardon of God. Nay, if he once wilfully omits a sin which he believes he is bound to confess, he will not only have to accuse himself of that sin, but until he has done so all his confessions will be sacrilegious, and will have to be repeated before he can hope for forgiveness.

The integrity of confession requires us to accuse ourselves, 1st, of the mortal sins of which we believe ourselves guilty; 2dly, of the number of times we have committed them, according to the best of our recollection; and 3dly, of all such circumstances as change the nature of the guilt. Thus, for example, if a person has told lies, it would not be enough to say he had sinned against the eighth commandment, but he must state in what particular he has offended; for rash judgment and detraction are no less sins against the eighth commandment than lies. Nor is it enough to say he has told lies, but he must mention the number of times. Where the exact number is known, it must be confessed; where it is uncertain, we should mention the number which we believe is nearest the truth; or at least we should state the average number of times a week or a month that the sin has been committed. Nor is this sufficient; but if the untruths which we have spoken have inflicted a serious injury on any one, that circumstance must be mentioned, because it changes the nature of the guilt. It is quite a different sin to tell a lie in excuse, by which no one is injured, and to tell a lie in order to destroy the character of some one we dislike, or to tell a lie when we are examined on oath. With regard to sins which are mortal or venial according to the amount of matter, the penitent should state whether he has transgressed the precept in a greater or less degree. Thus if he has been guilty of theft, he should declare whether the value of the thing stolen was great or small. Here the question will be asked, How are we to know what circumstances change the nature of the sin? It is difficult to lay down a general rule which will apply to all cases, but in practice the best and safest rule to follow, is to mention all those circumstances which we believe in our conscience very much increase our guilt. As it is not

necessary to confess venial sins, so it is not necessary to mention circumstances which slightly change the nature of the guilt. Unless, therefore, we have reason to believe the particular circumstances of the case either increase or lessen our guilt to a considerable extent, we need not scruple to omit all mention of them.

CHAP. CXV. Of the Manner in which Confession should be made.

AFTER the full explanations which have already been given, it will be sufficient to sum up in a few words all we have to do in order to prepare well for Confession. (1) As we cannot succeed without the help of God's grace, our first act will be to place ourselves in the presence of God, and to beg His assistance in order that we may make a good confession. We should in particular pray for light to know our sins, both as to their number and malice. (2) We must be ready to do all on our part to coöperate with the grace which God will give us. We must therefore diligently exert ourselves to find out all the sins which we have committed, together with such circumstances as we are bound to confess. (3) The sight and recollection of our sins will naturally arouse in our breasts feelings of repentance and sorrow; but as contrition is so necessary, we should earnestly beg it of God and make a diligent use of the means already explained for obtaining it. We should remember that our contrition is to remedy the past and provide for the future. It should move us to make acts of sorrow and detestation for past sin, and a firm purpose of amendment for the time to come.

When the preparation has been well made, the penitent should present himself at the Confessional, and ask the priest's blessing, saying, "Pray, father, give me your blessing." Then the priest will answer, "May the Lord be in thy heart and on thy lips, that thou mayest truly and humbly confess thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." The penitent will then recite the first part of the *Confiteor*, or "I confess," after which he should begin his confession,

in some such form as this: 'My last confession was, *e.g.* a month ago, when I received absolution and performed my penance. Since that time I accuse myself of doing so and so, or of being guilty of such and such sins, so many times.' If the penitent did not receive absolution the last time he made his confession, or if he made a bad confession, it will not do simply to confess the sins which he has committed since that time. His former sins are still upon his soul, and have to be confessed before he can be forgiven. In every case, therefore, the accusation must go back at least to the time when the penitent last made a good confession and received absolution.

It is necessary, therefore, to repeat the former confessions,—

1. When absolution has not been given, even though the sins have been confessed with good dispositions.

2. When the penitent reasonably believes that he has confessed his sins without having had any sorrow for them, or purpose of amendment.

3. When he has wilfully left out a sin which he believes he was bound to confess. As a general rule, the penitent should not trouble himself about his past confessions. When he has once received absolution, he should take for granted that the confession has been properly made, unless he has some clear and strong reason to believe either that he had no contrition, or that, through his own fault, he has concealed a sin which he ought to have confessed. Confession, being required by God as a condition for the remission of sin committed after baptism, should be made readily and freely. The penitent should not wait for the priest to ask questions, nor wilfully express himself in such a manner as to render any question necessary. He should do his best to make his confession himself, and not require it to be made for him; nor should he act like those who seem to be examining their conscience all the time they are making their confession. There are some persons who mention a sin and then make a long pause, as if they were trying to recollect something else; when at last they have brought out another sin, they again pause, and so continue to waste their own and their confessor's time. If

this proceeds from natural timidity, which they cannot overcome, they should be encouraged with patience and charity; but if it comes from their own fault, because they have taken no sufficient pains to recollect their sins, they should be taught that the examination of conscience and the act of contrition belong to the preparation, and should be made before they present themselves to the priest.

When the penitent has made a full and candid accusation of all that he can remember, he should add, "For these and all my other sins, which I cannot now remember, I am heartily sorry; I purpose amendment for the future, I most humbly ask pardon of God, and penance and absolution of you, my ghostly Father." After this he should recite the second part of the *Confiteor*, and as soon as he has finished he should listen with silence and docility to the counsels which are addressed to him. He should look on his confessor, in the tribunal of penance, as the representative of Jesus Christ, and therefore he should never address him by his name, but call him 'Father,' much less should he dispute with him, or set up his own judgment above that of his confessor. If it be clear that the confessor has misunderstood something which has been said, or if he propose a remedy or give a penance, which circumstances render impossible in the particular case, the penitent should explain himself with brevity and simplicity, but he should not forget that he kneels at the feet of the priest as one who is guilty before his judge. He should submit implicitly to the judgment of his confessor, as to the expediency or necessity of giving or refusing absolution. For though the priest is appointed judge in the tribunal of penance, with power to acquit or condemn, he cannot give or withhold absolution at his pleasure, but is guided by principles which determine how he is to deal with his penitent. If he believe the penitent to be well disposed, and there is no special reason for thinking a delay will produce greater good, he is bound to give absolution immediately. If, however, he has reason to doubt of the disposition of the penitent, or if he has clear and strong grounds to hope a delay will do good, he should defer absolution. Finally, if it be clear the penitent is not

in proper dispositions,—if, for instance, he refuse to pardon an injury, or to restore ill-gotten goods,—the confessor is bound to deny absolution. In all these cases it is the duty of the penitent to submit; and to complain when absolution is deferred or denied, would generally be a clear sign that the proper dispositions were wanting.

CHAP. CXVI. On Satisfaction.

THE word ‘satisfaction’ is sometimes used to signify the restitution which is necessary in the case of sins of injustice, or the reparation of our neighbour’s honour or good name unjustly taken away by sins of detraction, calumny, or in any other way. When, however, satisfaction is spoken of as a part of the Sacrament of Penance, it means the faithful performance of the penance enjoined by the priest. As the sins of the penitent are remitted when the absolution is pronounced by the priest, it is evident that the actual performance of the penance is not necessary for the forgiveness of sins. All that is required for the validity of the sacrament, is that the penitent should accept it when given, and have the intention of fulfilling it. The actual performance of the penance, however, is necessary for the integrity or completeness of the sacrament; so that if the penitent were to change his mind after confession, or neglect to do his penance, his past sins would still be forgiven, but he would commit a new sin. To understand the necessity of making satisfaction, or of doing penance for our sins, we must bear in mind that every sin is followed by two consequences; 1st, the guilt or stain which it leaves on the soul, and 2dly, the debt of punishment or satisfaction, which must be offered to God to atone for the injury or offence offered to Him by sin. If the guilt of the sin be grievous, the punishment which it deserves is eternal, while in smaller sins the punishment is only temporal. The guilt of sin is blotted out by sincere repentance, joined in the case of mortal sin with the actual reception, or at least the desire, of the Sacrament of Penance. When God pardons the sin, He always remits

the eternal punishment due to mortal sin, and at least a part of the temporal punishment due to the smaller sins of which we repent. But in place of the eternal punishment due to mortal sin, He generally requires some temporal chastisement or satisfaction which must be made by our penitential works in this life, or which will be expiated hereafter in purgatory. Our dispositions may be so perfect as to move God to remit at the same time both the guilt and the entire debt of punishment due to sin; but this is not usually the case. In the same sort of way as, when a person has been suffering from a severe illness, the body is left for a time weak and delicate, even after the cure has been effected, so, as a rule, there remains a debt of satisfaction to be made to God after our sins have been forgiven. We have instances of the remission of the guilt while a part of the temporal punishment was left, in Moses, who was pardoned his sin, but yet in punishment was not allowed to enter the promised land; and in David, who was assured on the part of God by the prophet Nathan that his sins had been forgiven; nevertheless a severe punishment was inflicted upon him, on account of these very sins, which were already forgiven (3 Kings xii. 13, 14).

In what way, then, is this debt of temporal punishment cancelled? As every sin leaves behind it a dark stain of guilt and a debt of punishment, so our virtuous actions produce two opposite good effects. The first of these is called merit, and the latter satisfaction. By merit we mean a title to a reward, and by satisfaction something which atones for a past fault. Thus if a child who has been undutiful to his parents is sorry for his faults, and does all he can to please them, by the promptness and diligence with which he obeys their wishes, he not only becomes more pleasing to them and more deserving of a reward, but he at the same time compensates or makes satisfaction for his former misconduct. So is it in our dealings with God. Our good works not only render us more pleasing in His sight, and gain for us a title to a reward in heaven, but they also help to cancel the debt of punishment due to our sins. Our merit, or title to a reward, belongs to ourselves alone and cannot benefit others,

but our satisfactions may be applied to others, or may help to enrich the treasury of the Church. We cannot suppose that the satisfactory merits of the saints, after they have fully atoned to God for the small sins which they have committed, are lost. These satisfactions, therefore, are applied according to the pious intention of those who gain them, or they are applied for the benefit of the Church in general. It is from the accumulated stores of satisfactory merit derived from the good works of the saints, of the Blessed Virgin, and, above all, of Jesus Christ Himself, that the treasury of the Church is formed, from which, as we shall presently see, she dispenses the rich abundance of holy indulgences. We have now cleared the way to answer the question which was proposed, viz. How may we cancel the debt of temporal punishment due to our sins?

1. By the faithful performance of the penance enjoined by the priest in confession. The good works which are imposed by the confessor in the Sacrament of Penance are calculated by their own nature, as is shown by the explanation already given, to satisfy for the punishment due to sin; but by virtue of the power of the keys they are also raised to a sacramental efficacy. The performance of the penance will therefore remit a much larger share of the temporal punishment, than the same good work would do if it were not enjoined in the Sacrament of Penance.

2. We may also discharge our debt by offering for this intention the satisfactory merit of our good works. Thus the three eminent good works, prayer, fasting, and alms-deeds, are specially efficacious for this purpose; and under the name of prayer are included all acts of piety and religion, as under the head of fasting are included all acts of mortification, whether they consist of self-imposed penances, or whether they are the sufferings and reverses of this life patiently endured as a punishment for our sins. So, too, under the term "alms-deeds" all acts of charity, whether spiritual or corporal, are comprised.

3. The third way by which the temporal punishment due to sin is removed is by gaining indulgences. The importance of this subject, however, calls for a more detailed explanation of it.

CHAP. CXVII. On Indulgences.

In order to understand the nature and meaning of indulgences, we must carefully bear in mind what has been already said respecting the twofold consequences of sin, *viz.* guilt and punishment. The guilt, as already explained, may be removed, while a portion of the temporal punishment yet remains to be expiated in this life, or to be exacted hereafter in purgatory. We must also bear in mind the satisfactory merit which belongs to our good works, and that the superabundant satisfactions of the saints, of the Blessed Virgin, and above all of Christ, form a rich treasure, which is intrusted to the keeping and dispensation of the Church.

In the words of the Catechism, an indulgence is defined, "a remission of the temporal punishment which often remains due to sin after its guilt has been remitted." It is not, then, in any sense a pardon of the guilt of sin, whether past, present, or future, but it always supposes that the guilt has been already removed, before its benefit can be applied to the soul. In virtue of the power of the keys given to the Church, and of the promise that whatever she should bind on earth should be bound in heaven, and that whatever she should loose upon earth should be loosed also in heaven, the Church possesses power from our Lord to apply to her children the satisfactions of Christ and of His saints, and so to cancel the debt of temporal punishment which they have deserved. We have an example of the exercise of this power recorded by St. Paul. One among the Corinthians had been guilty of a very great sin, and St. Paul imposed a very severe penance upon him (1 Cor. v. 1-6); but afterwards, at the intercession of the faithful, and owing to the great contrition of the penitent, the Apostle, in the name of Christ, released him from the penalty which he had imposed. "What I have pardoned, if I have pardoned any thing, for your sakes have I done it in the person of Christ" (2 Cor. ii. 10). That is to say, if the sincere sorrow and the penitential exercises of the incestuous Corinthian have left any thing to ex-

piate, I, in the person of Christ, have pardoned it for your sakes.

Kinds of Indulgences. Some indulgences are called plenary, and others partial. By a plenary indulgence is meant the remission of the whole debt of temporal punishment due to our sins, and by a partial indulgence is meant the remission of a part of that debt. If, for example, he who had gained for his own benefit a plenary indulgence were to die immediately afterwards, he would go straight to heaven without passing through purgatory; but if he had only gained a partial indulgence, he would have to expiate the rest of his debt in purgatory. Partial indulgences are granted in the form of so many days' or of so many years' indulgence, for the performance of certain acts of virtue. To understand the precise meaning of these expressions, it will be necessary to call to mind the ancient canonical penances. According to the ancient canons or rules of the Church, very severe penances were inflicted on those who had committed great sins. These penances lasted in some instances three, seven, or ten years, or even for the whole life; but they were often shortened on account of the good dispositions of the penitent, or at the prayer of the faithful, and especially of those who were suffering for the faith. This shortening or remission of a part of the penance imposed by the Church, is the same thing as an indulgence. When, therefore, we speak of an indulgence of a hundred days or of seven years, we do not mean the shortening of the duration of purgatory by that number of days or years, but the remission of so much of the temporal punishment due to sin, as would have been satisfied by a hundred days' or seven years' canonical penance, according to the ancient discipline of the Church.

Another division of indulgences refers to those which are granted for the benefit of the living, and those which may be also applied for the benefit of the dead. The former are for the use of the faithful on earth; the latter may be gained, either for our own use, or for the good of the souls in purgatory. Till recently there were many indulgences belonging to both of these classes; but the

present Pope has made all indulgences applicable both to the living and the dead. There is this difference between indulgences gained for the living and the dead, that in the former case their effect is produced by way of absolution, and in the latter by way of suffrage. The Church exercises direct authority over the faithful on earth; and when she absolves them from censures, from sin, or from the debt of punishment, the effect is infallible, provided the person so absolved be in proper dispositions. We are certain, therefore, in this case that the fruit of the indulgence will be applied where there is no obstacle, because Christ has promised the Church that "whatever she shall loose upon earth shall be loosed also in heaven" (St. Matt. xvi. 19). It is an article of faith that the souls in purgatory are helped by our prayers; but the Church does not exercise the same authority over the faithful departed that she does over those upon earth. She cannot, therefore, directly release the suffering souls by absolving them from their debt of punishment; but she offers to God a satisfaction equal to that debt, and she begs Him to accept it in their behalf. The indulgences thus gained will certainly not be lost, and should God not see fit to accept them in behalf of the particular souls for whom they are offered, He will not fail to allow them to serve for the benefit of others. But though God has not made us a distinct promise to accept our suffrages for the particular soul for whom they are offered, we know that He will do so, unless there be some special reason to the contrary. If, however, we are not so certain that the fruit of an indulgence will be applied to the particular soul in purgatory for whom it is offered, as we are in the case of indulgences for the living, yet we are more certain of the effect produced when the fruit of an indulgence is applied to a soul in purgatory, because we are more certain of the good dispositions of the souls in purgatory, and that there is no obstacle in them to prevent the indulgence from producing its full effect.

What are the conditions for gaining indulgences? In order to gain an indulgence certain conditions are required :

1. The person must be a member of the Church, that is, he must be baptised and free from excommunication.

2. He must have the intention of gaining the indulgence. It is not, however, necessary that he should know what indulgences are attached to the prayers and good works which he performs; but it is enough for him to form the general intention of gaining all the indulgences he can. It is commonly considered that an intention of this kind, made each morning, and not virtually recalled, will suffice for the indulgences of that day.

3. He must be in the state of grace. An indulgence being the remission of the temporal punishment which remains *after* the guilt has been remitted, necessarily presupposes a state of grace. Nay, so perfect must be this condition in the case of a plenary indulgence, that it requires a freedom from the guilt, not only of mortal, but also of venial sin. For so long as there remains on the soul the least venial sin unforgiven, the temporal punishment due to that sin cannot be remitted, and consequently the full benefit of a plenary indulgence cannot be obtained.

4. It is also necessary to perform all the good works which are prescribed as conditions for gaining the indulgence. There are a great variety of prayers and practices of piety to which partial indulgences are attached. The good works which are usually required in order to gain a plenary indulgence are, confession and communion, and prayers for the general good of the Church, or for some special blessing, according to the intention of the Holy Father. Weekly penitents are not obliged, as a rule, to make a particular confession in order to gain the indulgences which occur during the course of the week, provided, of course, they continue in the grace of God.

Besides the common form of plenary indulgences, there are others which are granted in the form of a jubilee. Among the ordinances which God commanded Moses to publish to the Jewish people, we read the following: "Thou shalt sanctify the fiftieth year, and shalt proclaim remission to all the inhabitants of thy land: for it is the year of jubilee" (Leviticus xxv. 10). Every fiftieth year, therefore, was observed as a time of great rejoicing. The

houses and lands which had been sold during the previous years returned to their original owners, all debtors were released from their obligations, and slaves set at liberty. In imitation of the jubilee of the old law, the Church at fixed periods dispenses to her children, with a more liberal hand, the treasures of holy indulgences; and to extend their benefit as widely as possible, she gives more ample powers to her priests in the tribunal of penance, and earnestly invites her children to make a good use of the great favours which she offers them. The indulgence of the jubilee, therefore, is a plenary indulgence, granted on special occasions, and attended with greater solemnity and more ample powers in the minister of the Sacrament of Penance; so that its fruit is more copious, more extended, and more certain than in common indulgences.

Some writers believe that the Christian jubilee was first celebrated by the Apostles themselves; but we have no clear evidence in support of this opinion. Pope Boniface VIII. is frequently spoken of as the first who published a jubilee; but it seems pretty certain that he only modified the form, and fixed the time of recurrence, of what had been previously established. The origin, therefore, of this form of granting indulgences is involved in obscurity. Boniface VIII. fixed the time for the jubilee for every hundredth year. Clement VI., in the year 1350, shortened the period to every fiftieth year, in imitation of the Jewish jubilee. Urban VI. ordered the jubilee to be celebrated every thirty-three years, in honour of the thirty-three years of our Lord's life upon earth. Finally, Paul II., in the year 1470, fixed the time of the jubilee for every twenty-five years, in order to extend its benefits as far as possible to each generation of the faithful. This constitution was carried into effect in the year 1475, under the pontificate of Sixtus IV., and has continued in force ever since. The jubilee of the holy year, as it is called, is first published in Rome, whither devout pilgrims flock from all parts of Christendom to visit the shrines of the Apostles, and to fulfil the conditions which are prescribed for gaining the jubilee. After the expiration of a twelvemonth it is extended to the rest of the Christian world. During

the continuance of the jubilee other plenary indulgences granted for the benefit of the living are, as a rule, suspended ; but those granted for the dead or the dying remain in full force.

Besides these more solemn and fixed periods for the jubilee of the holy year, particular jubilees are published by the Pope to thank God for some signal benefit, or to implore His aid in some pressing necessity. Thus our Holy Father Pius IX. published a jubilee to thank God for the definition of the Immaculate Conception; and Pope Gregory XVI. did the same thing some years previously for the peace and welfare of the Church in Spain. It is also customary for the new Pope to publish a jubilee on his accession. The conditions for gaining a jubilee may vary according to the pleasure of the Pope, as, in point of fact, those usually enjoined were modified on the last occasion a jubilee was published. For this reason, therefore, and because the Bishops are accustomed to enumerate the conditions at the time of publication, it will not be necessary to give them here.

CHAP. CXVIII. On the Minister of Penance, and its Effects.

HITHERTO the acts of the penitent, contrition, confession, and satisfaction, have been treated of, with some incidental notice of absolution and of other matters connected with the Minister of this sacrament. A great deal might be said about the qualities of a good confessor, and the way in which he should exercise his duties in reference to the different classes of his penitents ; but as these instructions are intended for the benefit of penitents, and not for confessors, there is no occasion to dwell on questions of this sort here. All, however, are interested in knowing that the confessor is bound by the strongest of all obligations to observe the strictest secrecy with regard to the knowledge acquired in confession. No matter how much good could be done or evil prevented by revealing the secrets of confession, it is in no case whatever, except by the free consent of the penitent, lawful to do so. This is a rule which

admits of no exception; for if the case could ever arise in which it would be lawful to make known the sins of a penitent without his consent, all confidence in the secrecy of confession would be at an end. A priest, therefore, must be ready to suffer any amount of torture, and to sacrifice even life itself, rather than manifest by word or sign, or in any other way, the least venial sin. The seal of confession extends not merely to all the sins mentioned, while the confession is actually being made, but also to every thing made known while the confession virtually continues, the manifestation of which would tend to make the confession of sins odious. Thus if a person were to go to his confessor while he was preparing for confession, in order to be instructed how to examine his conscience, or how to declare any class of sins,—or if he were to speak of his sins immediately after absolution,—or even if he came back again after leaving the confessional, and again referred to the matter of his accusation,—the confession would virtually continue all this time, and therefore the sins which were manifested would fall under the seal of confession. Many persons seem to imagine that a confessor is not bound to keep secret what he is told in the confessional immediately after absolution; but this is quite a mistake, unless what is said has no reference to the matter of the confession. This strict obligation of perpetual secrecy applies not only to the confessor, but also to all others who have accidentally, or in any other way, acquired knowledge through sacramental confession. For example, he who has overheard a sin in confession is as strictly bound to keep it secret as the priest himself.

This law of secrecy does not, however, bind the penitent. He may speak of his own sins, or of what his confessor has said to him, without being guilty of sacrilege; but it is generally better, and even sometimes obligatory, to observe silence. It may often happen that the advice which a priest may think it his duty to give, can only be understood by knowing all the facts of the case on which it rests, and therefore by making known what he has said a grievous wrong may be done him, while he has no means of clearing his character. Moreover, the recom-

mendations which are addressed to the penitent are meant for his particular case, and might not be beneficial for another who is differently circumstanced. A skilful physician may be perfectly correct in the remedies which he prescribes for his patients, and yet what is a real remedy for one may prove highly injurious to another. So is it with the recommendations of our spiritual physician in the Sacrament of Penance. If he who is careless and negligent applies to himself the rules which a confessor only intended for a penitent who was of a timorous and scrupulous conscience, he would fall into the same error as the sick man who took the medicine which was intended for one who was suffering from a totally different kind of illness. A discreet penitent, therefore, will always observe silence respecting what has been said in confession, unless there be clear and solid reasons for the contrary.

Effects of the Sacrament of Penance.

1. The Sacrament of Penance remits the guilt and eternal punishment due to sin, according to the promise of our Lord: "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven" (St. John xx.).

2. It imparts or increases sanctifying grace. If the soul be in the state of mortal sin, the worthy reception of the Sacrament of Penance clothes it once more with innocence and sanctity, and so renders it pleasing in the sight of God. If it is already free from grievous sin, sanctifying grace is increased within it, so that it becomes more pleasing before God.

3. It revives the merit of the previous good works which were performed in the state of grace. In explaining the tenth article of the Creed, it was pointed out that no supernatural merit could exist so long as the soul is in the state of mortal sin. Not only is it impossible to gain any title to a reward in heaven while the soul is separated from the friendship of God, but all the merit of previous good works remains in abeyance until the state of grace is recovered.

4. It gives sacramental grace, or a title to the actual graces which we most need, in order to guard us against a relapse into sin.

CHAP. CXIX. On Extreme Unction: its Nature, Institution, Matter, Form, and Subject.

"**EXTREME** Unction," says the Catechism, "is the anointing of the sick with holy oil, accompanied with prayer." It is a true and real sacrament, because it possesses all the requisites of a sacrament.

1. The outward sign, which consists in the anointing with oil, accompanied by the words, "By this holy anointing, and of His own most tender mercy, may the Lord forgive thee whatever thou hast committed by thy sight,—hearing;" and so of the other senses.

2. It has the promise of grace, as recorded by St. James: "Is any man sick among you? let him bring in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick man; and the Lord shall raise him up; *and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him*" (chap. v. 14, 15).

3. It must have been instituted by Christ; for none but God could give to an outward rite the power of forgiving sin and of imparting inward grace.

The name, Extreme Unction, or "last anointing," by which this sacrament is known, has been given to it because it is the last anointing administered by the Church to her children. There are several occasions in which anointing is used as a symbol of spiritual benefits conveyed to the soul. Thus in baptism the child is anointed immediately before and after the essential part of the sacrament. Thus, too, anointing with oil is used in administering confirmation and holy orders; but these several anointings precede extreme unction, and in consequence the name "last anointing" is given to this sacrament. The other sacraments in which anointing is used were intended for persons in health; extreme unction was instituted by our Lord to strengthen the dying, in their passage out of this world into another.

The matter of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction is oil of olives, blessed by a Bishop, and the form the words

used by the priest while he anoints the sick person : " By this holy anointing, and of His own most tender mercy, may the Lord forgive thee whatever thou hast committed by thy sight," &c. The eyes, the ears, the nostrils, the mouth, the hands, the feet, are each anointed, and the words of the form repeated, varying the termination with each of the different senses. The oil which is used should have been blessed by a Bishop on the previous Maundy Thursday. If it be necessary at the end of the year to give extreme unction before the fresh oil can be procured, it is right to do so ; but it is unlawful to use the oil of a former year when the newly-blessed oil may be had.

The subject of this sacrament is any person who has been baptised, has come to the use of reason, and is in danger of death by sickness. Baptism, as we have already seen, is the gate of the other sacraments, and consequently must be received before them ; and as extreme unction is instituted as a remedy for the effects of sin, it can only be received by those who have in a greater or less degree incurred its guilt. Finally, the recipient should be in danger of death by sickness. Thus infants and all who have never had the use of reason are incapable of receiving this sacrament. So also soldiers going into battle, or criminals led to execution, or sailors on a perilous voyage, cannot receive extreme unction, because, though they are in danger of death, it is not from sickness. No one should attempt, therefore, to receive this sacrament who is not considered dangerously ill ; but at the same time its reception should not be put off to the last extremity, because one of the effects of this sacrament is in some cases to recover people from sickness,—because of the danger of dying without it,—and because, when persons are so near their end, they are often incapable of disposing themselves in a fitting manner to receive its graces. As soon as the illness becomes serious, and there is a probability of death, the friends of the sick man should warn him of the necessity of preparing himself, and should take care a priest is sent for.

As extreme unction is a sacrament of the living, it ought to be received in the state of grace, and therefore

confession will usually be a part of the preparation required. When confession cannot be made, for instance, if the sick man be speechless, he should endeavour at least to make an act of perfect contrition, in order to receive the benefit of absolution, and to dispose himself as far as he is able for the effects of extreme unction.

CHAP. CXX. Effects of Extreme Unction, and its Minister.

1. **EXTREME** Unction cleanses the soul from venial sin, and also from the unknown mortal sins which have not been remitted in any other way, provided of course the sick man be truly penitent, that is, provided that he has at least attrition: "If he be in sins," says St. James, "they shall be forgiven him" (St. James v. 15).

2. It takes away the remains of sin. By the remains of sin we mean: (1) Any hidden guilt existing in the soul, which for want of sufficient contrition, or for any other reason, has not been removed by the Sacrament of Penance. (2) The evil dispositions left by the sins which have been already forgiven, for example, a difficulty in doing good, and a tendency to relapse into former guilt. (3) The temporal punishment due to sin. Extreme unction removes these consequences either wholly or in part, according to the good dispositions in which it is received.

3. Like the other sacraments of the living, it increases habitual grace, and gives sacramental grace or a title to actual graces, to enable the sick man to endure with patience and resignation the sufferings to which he is subject, and to resist the temptations which beset his last hour.

4. If God sees it expedient, this sacrament restores bodily health: "The prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up" (St. James v.).

Some persons are anxious to put off the reception of extreme unction to the last moment, because they seem to regard it as a prelude to certain death; while in truth, if it had been received earlier, it might have led to their recovery. It cannot be doubted that miraculous cures

are sometimes effected by extreme unction ; but the beneficial effects which it generally exercises on bodily health are produced in an indirect way. The grace of the sacrament soothes the soul, lessens the fear of death, and brings on such calm and peace of mind as often to lead to the restoration of health. If God be pleased to work a direct miracle, it is never too late for Him to do so ; but if the sacrament is to act as a natural remedy, indirectly restoring health in the way just explained, it must be received in due time, otherwise, like ordinary remedies which are applied too late, it will not produce its effects. Extreme unction can only be received once during the same danger. If, however, the sick man recover and again relapse into the same or any other dangerous illness, it should be again received.

The minister of extreme unction must be a priest : " Is any man sick among you ? let him bring in the *priests* of the Church." Any priest can validly administer this sacrament, but the proper minister is the parish priest of the sick person, or one of his assistants.

CHAP. CXXI. On Holy Orders: its Nature, Institution, Matter, and Form.

THE Church of God, being by Divine institution one visible body, kept together by visible signs,—by faith which cometh of hearing, and by external discipline,—implies in its constitution two distinct classes,—those who administer and those who receive the sacraments, those who preach and those who believe, those who govern and those who obey.

St. Paul says, "To every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the giving of Christ. Wherefore He saith: Ascending on high He led captivity captive: He gave gifts to men. And He gave some apostles and some prophets, and others some evangelists, and others some pastors and doctors. For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: until we all meet into the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto

the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ: that henceforth we be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the wickedness of men, by cunning craftiness, by which they lie in wait to deceive. But doing the truth in charity, we may in all things grow up in Him who is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body, being compacted and fitly joined together, by what every joint supplieth, according to the operation in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in charity" (Eph. iv. 7-16).

The Apostle here plainly tells us that our Lord established a hierarchy, *i.e.* a sacred body of teachers and rulers, to keep His people in one faith, and build them up in the way of salvation. The Evangelists narrate the occasion of His so doing. After His resurrection He came to His Apostles, and said to them, "All power is given Me in heaven and in earth: go ye, therefore, teach ye all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world" (St. Matt. xxviii. 20). "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (St. Mark xvi. 15). The authority which our Divine Lord received from His Father He here bestows on His Apostles; and on them, as the terms of the commission show, not as individuals, but as heads of the Church for ever. Hence His words prove that there will always be persons to stand in the place of the Apostles, and inherit their authority as preachers of the Gospel and administerers of the sacraments.

It has been seen that our Lord gave His Apostles and their successors power to consecrate and offer the Holy Eucharist, as a sacrifice in memory of His death; and further, that He bestowed on them authority to forgive or retain sins (St. John xx. 21-23). There are, then, two kinds of power in the Church. 1st. Jurisdiction, or power over the mystical body of Christ, which includes a right of governing the faithful at large, and judging the individual conscience before God. 2dly. The power to administer

sacraments and offer sacrifice, which is called power over Christ's natural body. This twofold power forms the priesthood, and resides in its fulness, first, in the Bishop of Rome, the successor of St. Peter, whom our Lord constituted the Rock of His Church, the feeder of His flock, to whom He gave the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and next, in the body of bishops in union with St. Peter's See. To the Pope and to the collective episcopate alone does it belong to define matters of faith. Each bishop has jurisdiction over the particular district assigned to him, called a diocese, wherein he governs the priests and the faithful. Subordinated to the bishop, and deriving from him his jurisdiction, is the simple priest, who has to preach the word, administer the sacraments, offer sacrifice, and direct in the way of salvation those committed to his charge.

Besides the priesthood, there are other orders or kinds of ministerial power which, more or less remotely, subserve it according to their office. In all there are seven orders in the Church,—priest, deacon, subdeacon, acolyte, exorcist, reader, and porter. The first three are called holy or greater orders, the last four minor or lesser. Observe, the priest comprehends both the bishop and simple priest, or presbyter; for a bishop is only a complete priest. Having spoken of the priesthood, it will be well to speak of each of the other orders in succession. And first of the deacon.

We read in the Acts of the Apostles (ch. vi.), that “when the number of the disciples increased, there arose a murmuring of the Greeks against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. Then the twelve, calling together the multitude of the disciples, said: It is not reason that we should leave the Word of God and serve tables. Wherefore look ye out among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and the ministry of the Word. And the saying was liked by all the multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte

of Antioch. These they set before the Apostles, and they, praying, imposed hands upon them." Here we have the account of the appointment of deacons. They were to help the priest, and relieve his burden in the external management of the church, especially in the distribution of alms.

St. Paul, in his Epistle to St. Timothy, dwells on the virtues which this office requires, and gives us a high idea of its dignity (1 Tim. iii. 8, 10). "To the deacon," says the Catechism of Trent, "as the eye of the Bishop, it belongs to investigate who, within the diocese, lead lives of piety and religion, and who do not; who attend Mass, and who do not; and to make the bishop acquainted with all these matters. In the absence of the bishop and priest, he may be delegated to expound the Gospel to the people; not, however, from an elevated place, to make it understood that this is not his proper office." The deacon's principal office at present is to assist the priest during solemn Mass. He pours wine into the chalice, offers it with the priest, chants the gospel, dismisses the people at the end. When it was the discipline of the Church to administer in both kinds, the deacon used to distribute the chalice. He used also to carry the Blessed Sacrament to the absent.

The office of the subdeacon, as the name shows, is to serve the deacon at the altar. It is his business to prepare the altar-linen, the vessels, the bread and wine necessary for the sacrifice. He delivers the chalice and paten to the deacon, hands him the cruets filled with wine, and pours the water into the chalice while the priest blesses it. He chants the epistle, ministers water to the bishop when he washes his hands during the Mass, and assists as a witness to the sacred mysteries.

The acolyte accompanies and serves the deacon and subdeacon. He hands the latter the cruets filled with wine and water; carries and attends to the lights used during the celebration of the sacrifice.

The exorcist receives power to drive out evil spirits from those possessed.

The reader's office is to read portions of the Old and New Testament during certain services of the Church.

The porter has to keep the keys and gate of the church, and exclude unworthy persons from entering. His duties correspond to those of a sacristan.

As a preparation for orders there is a ceremony called the tonsure, in which the hair is cut off the top of the head in form of a crown, in honour of the crown of thorns our Saviour wore, and to denote the royal dignity of the clerical state. Persons who have been tonsured are henceforth called clerics, because they have chosen the Lord for their lot ("cleros") and inheritance.

Such are the different kinds of ministers of the Church. The rite by which they are made is called from them Holy Orders, because it establishes that regular gradation of rank of which they are the instance.

As God alone could institute the priesthood, so God alone could appoint the means of its transmission; we are then prepared to find and are required to believe, at least in the case of the priesthood, that Holy Orders is one of the seven sacraments: "If any one shall say that orders, or sacred ordination, is not truly and properly a sacrament instituted by Christ the Lord, let him be anathema" (Coun. of Trent, sess. xxiii. c. 3). And its sacramental character is manifest in Holy Scripture. St. Paul, in his Epistles to St. Timothy, says: "Neglect not the grace that is in thee, which was given by prophecy with imposition of the hands of the priesthood" (1 Tim. iv. 14). And again, "I admonish thee that thou stir up the grace of God which is in thee by the imposition of my hands" (2 Tim. i. 6). Here we have all the elements of a sacrament,—the outward sign, the inward grace annexed, and divine appointment; for God alone can make outward signs means of grace.

As we hold that Christ instituted the diaconate, it is certain that that power, as well as the priesthood, is communicated by the same Sacrament of Orders; the distinct ordinations do not form different sacraments, but one sacrament conveys different powers. It is, however, very doubtful whether the Sacrament extends beyond the diaconate to the other orders, which are of ecclesiastical origin.

Imposition of hands, and the prayer which the Bishop says, constitute the matter and form in the ordination of priests, and probably nothing further is essential; the delivering of the sacred vessels, and the words, "Receive power to offer sacrifice for the living and the dead, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," as well as the last laying-on of the Bishop's hands, with the accompanying words, being only more explicit expressions of the same act. In the diaconate, too, most probably nothing further is needed for the external sign, than the imposition of the Bishop's hands and the words, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost for strength, and to resist the devil and his temptations."

CHAP. CXXII. On the Effects of the Sacrament of Orders: its Minister, and the Dispositions required for it.

1. BESIDES sanctifying grace, this sacrament impresses a character on the soul which distinguishes the ordained from other men, making him participate in a special manner in the ministry and priesthood of our Lord; hence it cannot be repeated.

2. In consequence, it gives power to offer sacrifice, administer sacraments, and govern the faithful; for external jurisdiction, or power over the body mystical, as well as the sacrificial and sacramental power of the priesthood, are given by Holy Orders, but in a different manner. The former is made over absolutely and irrevocably to the individual in form of an inherent faculty; the latter is given only on condition of due appointment by the Church, and rather in form of a title to actual grace for the fulfilment of an office. Any Bishop can validly ordain, and any priest can validly consecrate, even in direct opposition to the Church; but an heretical or schismatical Bishop has no jurisdiction or power of teaching or governing. Hence ordination alone does not confer jurisdiction; but it does confer the power of offering sacrifice and administering sacraments, and so the latter is commonly called the power of orders.

3. The ordained receives sacramental grace to perform aright all the duties of his state.

A bishop, and a bishop only, can administer Holy Orders; so that not even the Pope can delegate the power to a simple priest. This is certain as regards the priesthood; some deny it in the case of the diaconate, and beyond a question priests have been permitted to administer minor orders.

Subdeacons, deacons, and priests are ordained by one bishop; a bishop is always consecrated by three others, although one could do so validly.

Lastly, as to the dispositions for holy orders. To receive holy orders validly, (1) a person must be of the male sex; only a man can represent Christ, and only a man can mediate between God and man; "for a man is the glory of God, but a woman is the glory of the man" (1 Cor. xi. 7). (2) He must have been baptised; and (3) intend to receive the sacrament. To receive it duly, (1) he must be in a state of grace; (2) he must have a vocation or special call from God,—“for no man taketh this honour to himself but he that is called of God, as Aaron was” (Heb. v. 4); (3) he must be free from certain canonical impediments; and lastly, he must have a fixed purpose of continuing single and chaste.

From very early times the Western Church has required her bishops, priests, and deacons to be unmarried men, and for some centuries has included subdeacons under the same discipline. She now will not ordain married men, much less will she suffer them to marry after ordination. She does not assert that this practice is of divine precept, or that it is otherwise than a discipline of her own. There are, however, the strongest reasons for its enforcement: 1. Because celibacy is a more perfect state than that of marriage; and the clergy ought to be examples of that which is most perfect. 2. Because the distractions, cares, and embarrassments of the married state would interfere sadly with the duties of the priest, and prevent his giving himself wholly to the service of God: “He that is without a wife is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God; but he that is with a wife is solicitous for the things

of the world, how he may please his wife, and is divided" (1 Cor. vii. 27).

CHAP. CXXIII. Of Matrimony. Its First Institution.

THE last of the Seven Sacraments is Matrimony. It is so called from two Latin words, signifying the office of mother, *matris munus*; because, as the Roman Catechism says, the woman is married in order that she may become a mother: to bear and bring up children is the office of a mother.

The Catechism defines matrimony to be "a sacrament by which the contract of marriage is blessed and sanctified." As a sacrament it was instituted by our Lord when He was on earth; but as a contract, or state of life, it dates from the beginning of the world. As, then, the sacrament is founded on this contract, and cannot be separated from it, it is necessary first to speak of matrimony as a contract, before treating it as a sacrament of the new law. As a contract it is defined, "a lawful union of a man and woman, by which they give themselves up one to the other for mutual society and the begetting of children." As men bind themselves to one another by contracts of different sorts, and with different objects in view, so the essential part of matrimony, as a contract, is the man and woman binding themselves to one another. But in order to this being valid, it is necessary that the contract should be between persons who are not lawfully hindered from making it; that it should be voluntary, or else it is not really the parties binding themselves; and that the contract be expressed by words or outward signs, and this to signify, not that the contracting parties intend or promise to bind themselves hereafter to each other, but that they actually do so then and there, and with the intention of living as man and wife.

This being the explanation of the contract of matrimony, it must be remembered that it was instituted by God Himself when He made man. We read in the first chapter of Genesis, that "God created man in His own

image, . . . male and female created He them; and God blessed them, and said, Increase and multiply, and fill the earth" (Gen. i. 27). Here we see that the primary end of this union of man and woman in marriage is alluded to. Further on a more particular account of the creation of Eve is given, and the second end of marriage is referred to: "And the Lord said, It is not good for man to be alone; let us make a help like unto himself." And then a little farther on: "For Adam there was not found a helper like himself. Then the Lord cast a deep sleep on Adam; and when he was asleep, He took one of his ribs and filled up the flesh for it; and the Lord God built the rib which he took from Adam into a woman, and brought her to Adam; and Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. Wherefore a man shall leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh" (Gen. ii. 18 et seq.). And our Lord Himself refers to this account as showing that matrimony was of divine appointment (Matt. xix. 5). These two are spoken of as the ends of marriage before the fall of man. But after the fall, when now the flesh was no longer obedient to the spirit, there was a third subsidiary end of marriage, that through it men might more easily avoid offending God by sins of impurity. And so St. Paul, in speaking of those who do not possess the gift of continence, says: "To avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband" (1 Cor. vii. 2).

These were the three ends of matrimony as instituted by God; and, moreover, it was a perpetual and indissoluble union. This is to be gathered, as the Council of Trent teaches, from the passages already quoted from the Book of Genesis. We find, indeed, in the Book of Deuteronomy (chap. xxiv. 1) that directions are given concerning the divorcing of a wife; but when the disciples of our Lord referred to this permission, our Lord answered them, that "Moses, by reason of the hardness of your heart, permitted you to put away your wives, *but from the beginning it was not so*" (Matt. xix. 8).

CHAP. CXXIV. Of Matrimony as a Sacrament: its Nature, Institution, Matter, Form, Minister, and Subject.

SUCH being the contract of marriage as instituted by God, the next thing is to explain the sacrament which is founded on that contract. For as in every sacrament some sensible and natural thing is taken and raised into a means of grace, so in this sacrament the natural contract of marriage is raised to be a means of supernatural effects on our souls. Accordingly matrimony, as a sacrament, is defined as "a sacrament of the new law, by which the contract of marriage is blessed and sanctified;" by the contract of marriage being meant the legitimate union of man and woman, as already explained.

The Church has laid it down, in the Council of Trent, that matrimony is a true and proper sacrament, and one of the Seven instituted by our Lord. The Roman Catechism refers to the tradition of the Church, and to the words of St. Paul as proving this: "So also ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife, loveth himself: for no man ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, as also Christ doth the Church. For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall adhere to his wife; and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great sacrament: but I speak in Christ and in the Church" (Ep. v. 28). It is not known exactly when our Lord instituted this sacrament. Many of the Fathers thought that, as He sanctified water for washing away sins by being Himself baptised in the Jordan, so He sanctified marriage and raised it to the dignity of a sacrament, by Himself assisting at the marriage at Cana, where He worked His first miracle. While others refer to the words of our Lord when, in speaking of marriage, and its institution by God in Paradise, He said: "What, therefore, God hath joined together let no man put asunder" (Matt. xix. 6). And others, again, think that it was formerly ordained by our Lord, with other sacraments, after His Resurrection,

when he spoke to His disciples "of the kingdom of God" (Acts i. 3).

Matter and Form and Minister. There are some persons who have held that the minister of the Sacrament of Matrimony is a priest, and that the form is the words that are used by him in the Marriage Service: "I join you together in matrimony, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" the matter consisting in the persons of the man and woman which are mutually given over to each other. But the oldest, as well as the most common opinion,—if, indeed, it is not now universal,—is, that the contracting parties are themselves the ministers of the sacrament. For while the Church ordinarily requires the parish priest to assist at the ceremony, yet by its not always making the validity of the marriage to depend on this, it shows that it is not absolutely essential. From this, therefore, it would follow that while the matter of the sacrament consists, as has been said, in the mutual giving up of the contracting parties to one another, the form does not consist in the words of the priest,—which are intended to acknowledge and ratify the contract just made,—but in the words or outward signs, by which the man and woman mutually accept each other as husband and wife.

Subject of Matrimony. By the subjects of matrimony are meant the persons capable of receiving the sacrament. Every baptised person who is not hindered by any natural impediment, or any that arises from the law of God or of the Church, is capable of receiving the Sacrament of Matrimony. Thus there are four sorts of obstacles to receiving it validly. 1st. Unbaptised persons, though they can enter into the contract, are incapable of receiving the Sacrament of Marriage. 2dly. Persons incapable from any natural cause of the principal end of marriage cannot validly contract it. 3dly. The law of God prohibits persons within certain degrees of kindred from contracting marriage, so that they cannot do so validly; and 4thly. The law of the Church also prohibits certain persons, and declares them incapable of matrimony. But the prohibition "to marry within certain degrees of kindred, or in any way forbidden

by the Church," has been treated of in its own place, under the Precepts of the Church; and the prohibitions of the divine law are explained together with them.

CHAP. CXXV. Of the Indissolubility of Marriage.

THOUGH there are certain persons who are incapable of contracting matrimony, yet when the contracting parties are neither of them so hindered, and the sacrament has been ratified, the marriage cannot be dissolved by any earthly power. This was clearly laid down by our Lord Himself, when the Pharisees asked Him whether it was lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause. He referred them to the institution of marriage in the beginning; and after quoting the words of the Old Testament, He added, "What, therefore, God hath joined together let no man put asunder" (Matt. xix. 6).

Upon their objecting that Moses had given directions about divorce, He answered that Moses had permitted it because of the hardness of their hearts, but added: "I say to you, whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and he who shall marry her that is put away committeth adultery" (v. 9). And St. Paul teaches that nothing but death can dissolve the marriage-bond (Rom. vii. 2). As this is the law of God, the Church cannot give leave that it should be broken. And so we find in the history of the Church that the greatest inducements could not prevail on the Head of the Church to grant a dissolution of a true marriage, although, as in the case of England at the Reformation, the schism of a whole country was to be the consequence of refusal.

Yet there are some apparent exceptions to this rule. First, in case there has been some cause which rendered either of the parties incapable of contracting matrimony, the Church can, upon inquiring into the matter, and finding it to be so, declare the marriage null. This has sometimes been mistaken for a dissolving of the marriage; but in reality it is only declaring that there never was any real

marriage at all, because of some impediment which made the contract invalid.

Secondly, The Church can grant a divorce in the sense, not of dissolving the bond of marriage, but authorising the separation of man and wife. An exception of this sort is made by our Lord Himself when He says: "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication," that is, adultery. Yet it is plain that only a separation was here meant, and not a dissolution of the bond of matrimony; for our Lord adds, that "he that marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery" (Luke xvi. 18). And St. Paul commands that the wife should not depart from her husband; "and if she depart, that she remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband" (1 Cor. vii. 11). This is the difference between the mere contract of marriage, and marriage raised to the dignity of a sacrament. The Jews were permitted to put away their wives, and the bond of marriage was dissolved. So the Church can dispense for grave cause from the mere contract of marriage when, as in the case of unbaptised persons, the Sacrament of Marriage has not been received. But among Christians the bond of the Sacrament of Matrimony is indissoluble, and separation is only sanctioned for some grave cause, such as, (1) adultery; (2) one of the parties being unable to live with the other without great danger of losing faith or falling into grievous sin; or (3) from the mutual consent of the parties, in order that they may enter religion. But this last is not easily or frequently permitted.

The third exception is the case of the Church dissolving a marriage when it has not been ratified and sealed by the parties living together as man and wife, or, as it is called, "consummated." When it has been consummated, the Church cannot dissolve it; but till then it can be dissolved, if either party has a vocation to religion. This has been permitted by the tradition of the Church, and also because, being known to be permitted, it becomes a condition of the contract.

CHAP. CXXVI. Of the Effects, Dispositions, and Ceremonies of the Sacrament of Matrimony.

EFFECTS. The effects of the Sacrament of Matrimony are, that it gives the graces that are necessary to sanctify that state of life, and to enable married persons to fulfil rightly the duties that it imposes. The raising of matrimony to be a sacrament has been compared in its effects to the cultivating of a fruit-tree, which brings forth the same fruit as in its wild state, but sweet and well-flavoured, instead of being sour and unpalatable. So matrimony as a sacrament has the same ends and duties as before; but the grace attached to it enables the parties to love one another with a more faithful and enduring affection, so as to be able to fulfil the vows which they make before the altar to one another in sickness and health, in poverty as well as in riches. It also gives them grace for the fulfilling of all the duties they owe to their children in nurturing them and educating them.

Dispositions. But in order to receive the grace of this sacrament it is necessary to approach it in proper dispositions. The most essential of these is to be in a state of grace. For as matrimony is one of the sacraments of the living, it cannot be received by a person out of a state of grace without grievous sin. Hence it is the duty of persons who are about to be married to prepare themselves by a good confession; and this is considered so important, that it is usual to require a certificate of the parties that they have been to confession. If persons were to be married in a state of sin, though the marriage would be valid, yet they would not receive the graces of the Sacrament, nor is it certain that they would ever recover them, even when they had made a good confession. A part also of the good dispositions which fit a person for receiving the grace of the sacrament, is that they should seek by their marriage to sanctify themselves, and not enter into that state from low and unworthy

motives, but in order to forward their salvation. Children ought to seek the approval of their parents to their marriage, and to be willing to be directed by them. But they are not bound to follow the wishes of their parents when the latter are directed by motives of worldly policy or sordid interest.

The ceremonies of marriage consist in each of the parties grasping the right hand of the other, and pledging faith to him or her in a set form of words. After they have in this way solemnly given and accepted each other, the priest standing before them says, "I join you together in matrimony, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, amen;" and sprinkles them with holy water. The priest next blesses the ring, which he then returns to the bridegroom, who puts some money into the hand of the bride, and puts the ring on the third finger of the left hand, saying, "With this ring I thee wed, with my body I thee worship, and with all my worldly goods I thee endow, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." The ring is a sign of the mutual fidelity they owe to one another. But the ceremonies of marriage are not the same in all countries, the Church permitting such different ceremonies and forms of words as are usual in each country.

In this country, where matrimony is not looked upon by most people as a sacrament, nor the state of marriage regarded practically as a holy state, it is of especial importance to explain the subject fully and frequently, its nature and obligations, and the graces that belong to it. It is only in this way, and not by avoiding the subject, or passing it lightly over, that the tendency to regard it as the subject simply of jokes and laughter can be counteracted. The exhortations on the subject of matrimony in the English Ritual are very useful to help in giving instruction on it.

In some countries it is usual solemnly to affiance the bride and bridegroom to one another, in what is called *Espousals*. *Espousals* are a contract between a man and

a woman to accept one another in marriage, not at the present moment, but hereafter. Where these are customary the parties are absolutely bound to each other, and some other consequences follow. But as they are not customary in this country, it is sufficient to observe that even a promise of marriage is binding under mortal sin.

THE END.

LONDON :

PRINTED BY ROBSON, LEVY, AND FRANKLYN,
Great New Street and Fetter Lane.







